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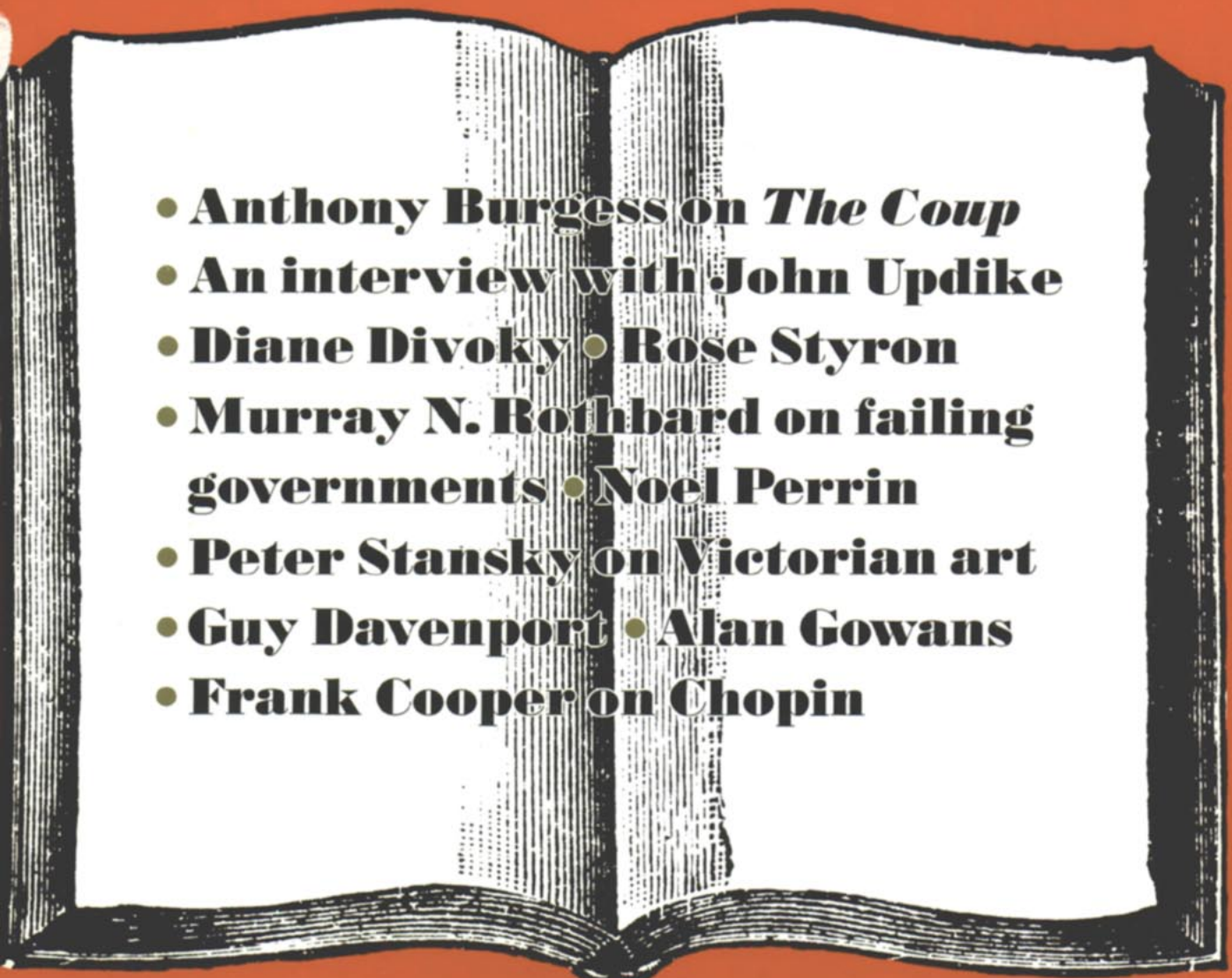

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- **An interview with John Updike**
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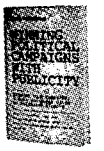

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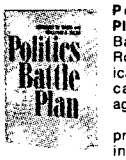

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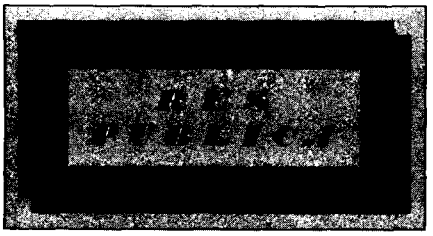

How now Mao?

■ In what appears to be a startling departure from policy in recent years, China is giving signs of introducing a limited market economy . . . At the same time it has entered into negotiations with a large number of foreign multinational corporations . . . Inter-Continental Hotels, a subsidiary of Pan American World Airways, has been talking with the Chinese about putting up and managing several hotels in Peking. The Government may soon allow tourists to shop with Diners' Club cards . . .

—*New York Times, Nov. 7, 1978*

Since when is there a law against a politician showing his ass in public?

■ The Cleveland school board's 27-year-old president was fined $100 Tuesday for baring his behind at a passing car.

—*Los Angeles Times, Nov. 1, 1978*

Achtung!

■ America is to get its own version of the Berlin Wall to keep out illegal Mexican migrants. Work is to start next month on a 10 ft. high steel barrier along sections of the US–Mexican border. . . .

"A comparison with the Berlin Wall is a little unfair," said Alphonso Velarde, president of the Catholic Conference Group which helps legal immigrants in El Paso. . . . "There won't be watchtowers or machine guns," said Velarde. "The Immigration Department just has border patrols armed with .38 Magnum revolvers."

—*London Sunday Times, Oct. 22, 1978*

Just the guy to clean up the GSA

■ President Carter's 1976 election campaign committee has been fined $1,000 and ordered to refund $17,025 in public campaign funds it used illegally to pay post-election transition expenses, the Federal Election Commission announced Friday. . . .

It said Carter aides had used left-over campaign funds to pay salaries and travel expenses for 20 individuals who worked on White House personnel placement projects. . . .

Walter V. Kallaur, a campaign aide who was financial administrator of Carter's transition team, said . . . that he had been unsuccessful in trying to put the workers on the White House payroll because Carter was seeking to reduce the size of the White House staff.

"We came up with the idea of using campaign funds because we thought it made sense," said Kallaur, who since has become a regional administrator in the General Services Administration. . . .

—*Los Angeles Times, Oct. 14, 1978*

Ladies and gentlemen, the junior senator from the great state of Iowa

■ It was bad enough, Republicans here [in Iowa] thought, when their Senate candidate defended apartheid—but why did he have to do it in the state's most liberal city? And why did Roger Jepsen have to . . . become involved in a zany scheme to stock the offices of the state Commission on the Blind with a secret arsenal of automatic rifles?

—*Washington Post, Oct. 27, 1978*

Into the Big Muddy

■ "Our friendship and our alliance with Iran is one of our important bases on which our entire foreign policy depends," [Jimmy] Carter told [Iran's Crown Prince Reza] who is undergoing training at the U.S. Air Force Academy.

"We are thankful for his move toward democracy," Carter added, referring to the shah's liberalization policies. "We know it is opposed by some who don't like democratic principles, but his progressive administration is very valuable, I think, to the entire Western world."

—*Washington Post, Oct. 31, 1978*

Here at Langley, we've always considered honesty the best policy

■ Soviet foreign policy relies heavily on the spreading of lies, rumors, forged documents and other propaganda ploys to discredit the United States, the CIA says in a 96-page report prepared for the House Intelligence Committee. "Exaggeration, innuendo and outright falsehood are common."

—*Colorado Springs Sun, Sept. 18, 1978*

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Lessons of the election

A vote against government

THE NOVEMBER ELECTIONS PROVE once again that we live not in the beloved two-party system of our civics textbooks, but in a one-and-a-half-party system. To all intents and purposes the Congress, and state legislatures, are run almost exclusively by the Democratic party. While the Republicans did gain five governors, a respectable showing, not much happened in the state legislatures—or in Congress, where the Republicans picked up only three seats in the Senate and eight in the House. If we consider that the Republicans began at rock bottom in each of these arenas, and that a gain of 20 or 30 in the House for the out party in an off-year election is considered modest, we can clearly see the abysmal state to which the Republicans have fallen.

The continuing atrophy of the Republican party means that many of the important shifts in public sentiment and political stance take place outside of the orthodox Democratic vs. Republican party structure. For one thing, California's famous Proposition 13 has highlighted the potential of popular initiatives, with the people voting directly on constitutional changes or legislative measures. In the short span of time since the June victory of Proposition 13, groups in 16 states, mainly in the West, put tax or spending limitation initiatives on the ballot. Twelve of these initiatives won easily.

Another shift has taken place within the Democratic party itself: the remarkable alacrity with which former New Deal Democrats sensed voter discontent with big government and high taxes and leaped nimbly on the antitax bandwagon—and liberalism be hanged. The most notable example is Governor Jerry Brown, who has flip-flopped twice on the subject of taxes and big government.

In Brown's state of California the voters in November roundly rejected both Proposition Five, which would have limited smoking in most public areas, and Proposition Six, an aggressively right-wing proposal that would have permitted the discharge of any public school teachers who advocated, "encouraged," or admittedly practiced homosexuality. In conventional parlance, we might call the defeat of Proposition Five "conservative" and that of Proposition Six "liberal," but in both cases, as well as in the antitax victories, the voters were really saying something else: they were saying "No" to government interference in their lives, whether in personal life-styles or commercial activity.

In Massachusetts, businessman Edward J. King defeated incumbent Governor Michael Dukakis in a stunning upset in the primary. Dukakis, like Jerry Brown, had originally cultivated a "lower expectations" image, which was then quickly forgotten in a heady rush for more taxes and spending; King, perhaps sensing the new mood in the only state in the Union that had voted for McGovern in 1972, ran on a program of tax and spending cuts, capital punishment, and opposition to government funding of abortion. He has now defeated liberal Republican Francis Hatch, which means not only that a conservative Democrat is in the state house, but also that liberal Republicanism in Massachusetts has been decimated.

Even more striking than the change in Massachusetts politics is the overthrow of Democratic-Farmer-Labor hegemony in Minnesota. For many years, Minnesota has been not only a solidly Democratic state, but also the home of perhaps the most outspokenly liberal Democratic party in the nation. The Minnesota party is the home of Hubert Humphrey, Vice President Mondale, and Representative Don Fraser, recent head of Americans for Democratic Action. In the senatorial primary, Fraser was beaten in a stunning upset by millionaire Robert Short, who ran on a program of tax and spending cuts, and on a highly popular antienvironmentalist plank of permitting motorboats and snowmobiles in recreational areas where affluent, big-city liberals had wished to see only canoes and sleds. Although Short lost in the election to liberal Republican Albert Quie, Short's primary victory managed to split and weaken the Democratic-Farmer-Labor party so badly that the Republicans could sweep two Senate seats as well as the governorship.

But only an antigovernment trend can explain what happened in New Hampshire. Here was a seeming anomaly, in terms of the usual conservative-liberal analysis. The most right-wing governor in the nation, Meldrim Thomson, lost his post in a stunning upset by former state Representative Hugh Gallen; and in the same general election, liberal incumbent Democratic Senator Thomas McIntyre lost to Gordon Humphrey, former director of the New Hampshire Conservative Caucus, who had stressed the Kemp-Roth tax cut as his major issue. But the tax issue won't explain the defeat of Governor Thomson who, like his opponent, opposed higher taxes; nor does personality, for the crusty and often eccentric Thomson was actually well liked in New Hampshire. However, Gallen benefited from consumer anger at high electric bills caused by the Thomson-sponsored Seabrook nuclear power plant, a plant that Thomson insisted consumers pay for in advance.

In short, the voters of New Hampshire were not unaccountably liberal when voting for governor and conservative for the Senate; in both cases, they were opposed to high taxation and government spending, but they were also opposed to the governor's insistence that they subsidize the government-franchised public utility. In both cases, the voter mood was not so much conservative as it was antigovernment. Perhaps that was the general message of this November's election.

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FIRST AMENDMENT WATCH

NAT HENTOFF

The right to read

TWO YEARS AGO, THE school board in Milton, New Hampshire, removed Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* from the high school library. It contained, said the chairwoman of the board, "language you wouldn't allow to be used in the home." Like "bastard."

In the same year, the school board in the Island Trees school district of Levittown, New York, banished from the junior and senior high school libraries such "obscene," "blasphemous," and "perverse" books as Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse Five*, Bernard Malamud's *The Fixer*, and *Go Ask Alice*. Said the head of the board: "What is taught in the schools is a reflection of the values of a society—in this instance, the local community. One of the purposes of a Board of Education is to see that local control is maintained and that the will of the majority prevails."

That sense of a school board's responsibility is quite common throughout the country, and so books continue to be expelled from school libraries with great frequency. Indeed, some volumes have a yellow sheet as long as that of a chronic housebreaker or mugger. *Go Ask Alice*, for instance. A rather poignant, and ultimately depressing, novel about a girl literally destroyed by drugs, the book—for all its didacticism—keeps being kicked out of school libraries because of its naturalistic use of street language. Recently, *Go Ask Alice* was tracked down in the Warsaw, Indiana, school library and instantly defenestrated. To make certain such pernicious volumes do not linger in the town, a senior citizens club buys up the discarded books and burns them. *Alice* joined the pyre.

While librarians' associations and the American Civil Liberties Union have long been exercised at the hardiness of this form of censorship, the state of First Amendment law in this area remains greatly underdeveloped. The Supreme Court, for one thing, has yet to rule directly on any case involving school-board censorship of school libraries. And the two leading lower court cases so far have resulted in contradictory decisions.

In *Presidents Council, District 25 v. Community School Board No. 25* (1972), the Second Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the right of a school board to remove Piri Thomas's *Down These Mean Streets* from junior high school libraries because some of the language and scenes in the book were "ugly and violent." The United States Supreme Court refused to review the case, although Justice William O. Douglas vehemently disagreed with his brethren:

> What else can the School Board now decide it does not like? How else will its sensibilities be offended? Are we sending children to school to be educated by the norms of the School Board or are we educating our youth to shed the prejudices of the past, to explore all forms of thought, and to find solutions to our world's problems?

On the other hand, in *Minarcini v. Strongsville City School District*, in 1976, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals overruled a lower court and denied a school board's right to remove Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* and Kurt Vonnegut's *Cat's Cradle* from a high school library in Ohio. The appeals court said that while a school board was under no obligation to set up a library, once it did so, its members could not "place conditions on the use of the library which were related solely to the social or political tastes of school board members." That is, removing a book because it personally offends a school-board member is in violation of the students' First Amendment right to receive information.

For several years, with these two decisions in conflict and no guidance from the highest court of all, censorship of school libraries has gone unchecked. Furthermore, in recent years black, feminist, and other "progressive" groups have joined conservatives in pressuring school boards to remove other kinds of "harmful" books. And sometimes they succeed.

At New Trier East High School in Winnetka, Illinois, an alliance of black parents and some faculty members struggled for seven years to get *Huckleberry Finn* taken off the required reading list and kept in the library only for restricted use. They did not like the way Mark Twain dealt with race relations, and they did not like his language. And they have won. In Maryland's Montgomery County, the local branch of the National Organization for Women has been devoting itself to strict scrutiny of books "thoroughly riddled with sexism."

Complicating this particular censorship issue is the strong feeling of some parents, many of whom may not be affiliated with any group at all, that the state must not have total control of their children's minds. These parents maintain—as in West Virginia, explosively, several years ago—that they do not want family values eroded in the schools and that they have the right to veto certain books assigned to their children.

The High Court has yet to rule directly on cases of school-board censorship.

All of these differing values have clashed fiercely during the past year and a half in a school-library war in Chelsea, Massachusetts, a working-class city of 30,000, northeast of Boston. Sonja Coleman, the librarian of Chelsea High School, ordered a paperback original, *Male & Female Under 18: Frank Comments From Young People About Their Sex Roles Today.* Edited by Nancy Larrick and Eve Merriam (both with extensive backgrounds in books for young readers), the volume was published by Avon in 1973. The editors had circularized schools around the country, asking for contributions in any form that would "tell us what it is like to be a girl or boy growing up in the 1970's."

NAT HENTOFF writes a regular monthly column on civil liberties issues for INQUIRY. His recent books include Does Anybody Give a Damn? *and* Jazz Is.

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Jody Caravaglia, then 15 and attending Hunter High School in New York, sent in a poem she had written for an English class, "The City To A Young Girl":

The city is
One million horny lip-smacking men
Screaming for my body.
The streets are long conveyor belts
Loaded with these suckling pigs.
All begging for
a lay
a little pussy
a bit of tit
a leg to rub against
a handful of ass
the connoisseurs of cunt
Every day, every night
Pressing in on me closer and closer.
I swat them off like flies
but they keep coming back.
I'm a good piece of meat.

In May 1977, a parent complained to the chairman of the Chelsea school committee that his 14-year-old daughter had borrowed the anthology from the school library, read the poem, and became greatly upset. The parent was outraged that his tax money should be used to purchase such trash for a *school* library.

The chairman agreed, finding Jody Caravaglia's language "filthy" and "offensive." A series of tumultuous school-committee meetings was held concerning the poem, with most of the members as outraged as the chairman and the parent.

Two students, however, spoke for the poem.

One affirmed the honesty of the work, and its value in educating the boys in the school. After all, she said, turning to the committee chairman, "you should walk though Chelsea Square with a girl some time and just listen to what these guys say."

The other young woman, president of the junior class, pointed out: "I'm not here to defend this poem, for in my opinion, the language used is vulgar. But I am here to express my concern for the right of any student to read what he or she desires. To take a book out of the Chelsea High School library is unjust, unlawful, and against the First Amendment, for this is censorship."

The school committee was unmoved by their arguments. Its members saw their responsibility as representing the values of the vast majority of the community; "To the average working-class Chelsea people," emphasized the chairman, "this is dirty rotten filth!"

BEARING THE BRUNT OF this attack was the librarian, Sonja Coleman, who was being threatened with denial of tenure if she did not yield what she called her First Amendment position. But she would not yield. At one meeting, she told the assembly that she did indeed "wholeheartedly" agree that any parent has the right to question the suitability of a book for *his* own child. But she could not support the notion that any book in the library should be denied to any of the *other* students who wanted to read it—especially when, as in this case, there had been no due process, no orderly hearing according to American Library Association standards. (Being yelled at during these school-committee meetings did not strike her as a hearing.)

At last, as everyone expected, the Chelsea school committee banned Jody Caravaglia's poem from the library on July 28, 1977. The anthology could stay, but only if the offending page was ripped out of every volume. Within a week, the Right to Read Defense Committee of Chelsea—Sonja Coleman, two teachers, three students, the parents of one, and the Massachusetts Library Association—filed a suit in federal district court against the school committee.

They asked for a preliminary injunction to prevent the censoring or banning of the book, an order to prohibit reprisals against Sonja Coleman, and a declaratory judgment that removing the work from the library violated the rights of students, teachers, and librarians "to receive and communicate ideas and information." Also at stake was the right of librarians to "academic freedom."

In November 1977, a six-day trial took place, attended by well over a hundred Chelsea High School students, crammed into every seat, hunching on the floor, riveted by this constitutional struggle over their "right to read."

At last, on July 5, 1978, federal Judge Joseph Tauro delivered his opinion. The anthology, including the poem, was *not* to be removed from the school library and was to be "made available to all students at Chelsea High School in accordance with the standard library procedures."

In the strongest, clearest language used against school-library censorship in American judicial history, Tauro began by saying that while a school committee clearly has the power to decide what books go *into* a library and, "indeed, if there will be any library at all," its power to *remove* a book is less clear. And it is certainly not absolute.

It is true, he added, that by state statute, the school committee is in charge of the schools, but that authority can be curbed by the courts when "basic constitutional values" are involved. And so they are here. In the testimony, it was evident that the members of the committee found the poem "filthy," "obscene," and "disgusting." But these were *personal* judgments. And the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in the 1976 *Minarcini* case that it is unconstitutional for a school board to "place conditions on the use of the library which were related solely to the social or political tastes of school board members."

Can a school committee ever lawfully censor a book? Only, said Judge Tauro, when it is able, in a hearing, to demonstrate "some substantial and legitimate government interest" in getting rid of the work. If, for instance, it can prove the book can or will do harm to the students. No such evidence concerning this poem was submitted during the trial. Nor was there any evidence, surely, that the poem might lead to imminent disruption of learning at the school.

Tauro went on to make a crucial point about allowing school committees the absolute right to censor books. "If this work may be removed by a committee hostile to its language and theme," he said, "then the precedent is set for removal of any other work. The prospect of successive school committees 'sanitizing' the school library of views divergent from their own is alarming, whether they do it book by book or one page at a time."

IT WAS PRECISELY IN FEAR of that tyranny of the majority, as James Madison warned, that the Bill of Rights—including its first and foremost element—was adopted. Or, as Judge Tauro went on to say, "What is at stake here is the right to read and be exposed to controversial thoughts and language—a valuable right subject to First Amendment protection."

And then, going back to the 1969 *Tinker* case, a landmark Supreme

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Court decision affirming that students, in school as well as out, are "persons" under the Constitution, Tauro quoted: "In our system, students may not be regarded as closed-circuit recipients of only that which the State chooses to communicate. They may not be confined to the expression of those sentiments that are officially approved."

The Chelsea opinion ended: "The most effective antidote to the poison of mindless orthodoxy is ready access to a broad sweep of ideas and philosophies. The danger is in mind control." And that is why the school committee's ban of Jody Caravaglia's poem has been rescinded.

Tauro's decision, being on the district-court level, is of only advisory value to other judges, but until the Supreme Court rules on the issue—and this case is not being appealed—the ruling is likely to have considerable force. For one thing, there are few other decisions for the courts to go by, and this one is unequivocal. It goes beyond *Minarcini,* and any other, by setting a heavy burden on a school committee to justify censorship of a library book ("substantial and legitimate government interest"). Also, unlike *Minarcini*—which was judged largely on the basis of affidavits—this case was decided after a detailed court record was made during a full trial. Usually, the more developed the record, the stronger are the ramifications of the decision.

The conflict between school-committee authority and the First Amendment, however, is far from settled. The Island Trees censorship case (the removal of *The Fixer, Go Ask Alice,* et al. from the Levittown schools) awaits decision in the Second Circuit Court of Appeals, the same circuit that approved the removal of *Down These Mean Streets.* Should that court again uphold a school committee, it may be that the Supreme Court will finally review a case on school-library censorship. And in view of the acute sensitivity of the Burger Court to the language in the "seven dirty words" case [*INQUIRY,* Aug. 21, 1978], it is hardly certain that Jody Caravaglia's poem (which has three of those words) will receive First Amendment protection.

But until then, Judge Joseph Tauro has vigorously expanded the rights of students and librarians to free inquiry. He was, by the way, a Nixon appointee. In these matters, nothing is ever predictable.

L A W

BILL WALLACE

LEIU's political police

FOR SEVERAL YEARS, civil liberties groups and others concerned about political surveillance have charged that the Law Enforcement Intelligence Unit (LEIU), a confederation of about 250 police and corporate intelligence units in the United States and Canada, is a national clearinghouse for information on the activities of political dissidents. Officials of the LEIU and other law enforcement officers have consistently denied these accusations, maintaining that the LEIU is concerned only with Mafia-style organized crime.

And there, for lack of conclusive proof, the matter had rested—until last month, when, in response to a Freedom of Information Act request by Temple University law student David Power, the FBI released more than a thousand pages of documents on the LEIU. The documents provide unshakable evidence that the LEIU has been engaged in political spying at least since the early sixties.

This involvement with political espionage seems to have begun in 1962, when 72 law enforcement agents and corporate executives met in San Francisco under the LEIU's auspices. According to the documents, one of the three items on the conference agenda was a discussion of "Police intelligence units' role in securing information concerning protest groups, demonstrations and mob violence."

By 1965, LEIU's political spying program appears to have been well established. The tenth annual LEIU conference that year included "a talk on subversive activities, including the Black Muslims," how to use U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service files to investigate "foreign-born persons involved in subversive activities," and "subversive movements . . . whose material is extremely revolutionary and directed toward police."

The following year LEIU's annual conference included a workshop on "Civil Disturbances and Dissemination of Information," conducted by Thomas F. Fitzpatrick, then head of the San Francisco Police Department's intelligence bureau and national chairman of LEIU. The LEIU northwestern zone meeting, held later that same year in Oakland, California, featured discussions of "the recent racial disturbances in Oakland, the 'criminal conspiracy of the Communist movement' [and] how to utilize state resources in riot situations." An investigator for the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee spoke to a regional conference in 1968 on "Castro's Influence on Student Uprisings."

The 1969 LEIU annual conference—conducted under the title "Revolution 1969"—included a talk on "Campus Riots," one on "International Influence in Current Disorders," and a full-day intelligence briefing for LEIU members on "the names of local militant organizations, top leadership, identifying traveling members, financial support and other sources of support and influence."

The agenda for LEIU's 1970 conference, entitled "Organized Destruction of America," makes even clearer the depth of LEIU's interest in political espionage. As recently released FBI documents reveal, the conference featured a variety of law enforcement experts talking about the problems of gathering information on "subversives," including—to use the words of one speaker, San Francisco police inspector Cecil Phallis—the members of "organizations such as Students for a Democratic Society, and its Weatherman Faction, the Black Panther Party, the Progressive Labor Party, and the Radical Student Union—ad infinitum."

And why should the LEIU, an organization founded to fight organized crime, be spending so much time and energy gathering and disseminating intelligence on such "subversive" groups?

"The answer to the question," according to another speaker, Captain Tom Lyons of the Chicago Police Intelligence Unit, "is that we have a responsibility to gather information on the Panthers [and others] and disseminate it to our fellow officers and

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the public. . . . The goal they seek is criminal: sedition, treason, and violent overthrow of constituted authority have traditionally been considered the most heinous of crimes."

The documents also show that the LEIU's interest in political intelligence did not stop with the discussions at its annual meetings. The FBI papers reveal that in 1971, LEIU officials Earle Simmons and James Ashley requested the aid of the New York City Police Intelligence Unit in providing "any information concerning possible disturbances at San Diego, California, during the Republican Party National Convention in 1972." Also, according to LEIU files released recently in an Illinois civil lawsuit, during the same year LEIU compiled dossiers on antiwar activists such as Michael Lerner (LEIU file #2263), a "Marxist scholar, activist [and] leader in the Seattle, Washington, liberation front."

OTHER LEIU "ORGANIZED crime" figures include Richard Henry (LEIU file #2630), president of a black nationalist group called the Republic of New Africa, which was, according to the LEIU, "attempting to take five southern states to form a black nation with a Chinese Communist-oriented government"; Anne Braden (LEIU file #C-71), a "longtime Communist Party member . . . [who] has assisted in organizing many radical groups and publications in the southern U.S."; Lee Lubinsky (LEIU file #2302), "a recognized leader in peace movements. . . . Summary of arrests: none listed"; and American Indian Movement leaders Dennis Banks (LEIU #4008), Russell Means (#4010), and Clyde Bellecourt (#4002).

The unveiling of these documents should be extremely embarrassing to a number of law enforcement officers who have lied about LEIU's political espionage activities. In mid-1977, Detroit Police Chief William Hart told the Detroit City Council that the LEIU's only purpose was to gather information and exchange files on organized crime figures involved in bombings, narcotics, murder, kidnapping, labor racketeering, loan sharking, and unlawful gambling. Just last May, Seattle Police Chief H.A. Vanden Wyer told Washington state activists that LEIU files contained only information about Mafia-style gangsters and their associates—a claim that crumbled when the head of Vanden Wyer's intelligence unit was fired for concealing LEIU cards on political activists.

Similarly, in 1976 Michael Capizzi, an Orange County, California, assistant district attorney, who was at the time legal counsel to LEIU, unequivocally told the California State Assembly Criminal Justice Committee that LEIU did not spy on political activists or on anyone else who wasn't a criminal. The LEIU, he testified, had no "capability or responsibility in that area."

Capizzi's statement is all the more disingenuous in view of the central position California occupies in the LEIU. Since 1956, when the LEIU was established, a bureau (now part of the Organized Crime and Criminal Intelligence Bureau) of California's Department of Justice has served as coordinating body for the far-flung LEIU network [*INQUIRY*, Feb. 6, 1978]. Each LEIU member forwards all data to the OCCIB, which is then responsible for keeping the master files. As one of the FBI memos notes, members are free to choose their own intelligence targets —but "from time to time, (OCCIB) may request a report on a specific target."

Without question, then, the law enforcement official with the most egg on his face is California Attorney General Evelle Younger, who as head of the state's Department of Justice for the past eight years has had direct responsibility for much of the political information that has been collected by the LEIU. Younger and his staff have consistently denied any involvement in political spying. As Younger himself said in a 1976 press statement, "The Department does not keep any files for political purposes."

Since Evelle Younger was the Republican candidate for governor of California in November, one might have expected his Democratic opponent to use this demonstrable duplicity as a campaign issue. It seems reasonable to expect that Younger must have known that his own Justice Department was engaged in collecting political information.

However, to the end, Younger's opponent remained silent on the matter. Perhaps that was because Younger's opponent is still Younger's boss, California Governor Jerry Brown—and while it does not necessarily follow that Brown knew what the Justice Department was up to, it is probably not too much to expect that he could have found out. If he had been interested.

POLITICS

MICHAEL MCMENAMIN

Going broke in Cleveland

ALTHOUGH MAYOR DENNIS Kucinich steadfastly denies it, Cleveland is broke. Fresh from his narrow escape in an unprecedented (for Cleveland) recall election, Kucinich, a Democrat, now faces an even greater crisis: If the city doesn't come up with new revenues, Cleveland will have to default on $15.5 million in city notes that come due on December 15.

Cleveland has been living beyond its means for years. It was mortgaged to the hilt by its last mayor, Ralph Perk, a Republican, who stayed in office for six years by pledging increased city services and no new taxes. Perk kept his promise by borrowing money, living off federal grants, and selling city assets. Kucinich inherited Cleveland's fiscal mess much as Abe Beame inherited New York's financial troubles from its Republican mayor, John Lindsay.

But Kucinich has more in common with Abe Beame than having inherited a fiscal mess. Like Beame, he doesn't know what to do; and like his Republican predecessor, he still promises improved city services and no new taxes. Unfortunately for Kucinich and for Cleveland, that tune is no longer popular with investors. Moody's Investors Service has lowered, and Standard & Poor's has suspended, Cleveland's credit rating for bonds because the city had been regularly using proceeds from its capital-improvement bonds to pay for normal operating expenses. And Kucinich's 24-year-old finance director, Joseph Tegreene, candidly confessed that the city books were "in such god-awful shape" that he couldn't tell where all the bond pro-

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BRUCE MCGILLIVRAY

ceeds had been spent.

Kucinich's response to the crisis has been to expound a new political philosophy, something he calls the "new urban populism." He unveiled the doctrine in September in a speech before the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. The phrase has a nice progressive, even radical, sound to it, but Kucinich's speech made it clear that the "new urban populism" is less a political philosophy than an enemies list:

- The press. The media in Cleveland unanimously endorsed the recall, and Kucinich hasn't forgotten. "The news media's advocacy of the recall illustrates a serious flaw in the celebrated constitutional concept of the free press," he said. "Corporate America's domination of the news media eclipses the meaning of a free press doctrine."
- Business. Kucinich is particularly irked by those companies that have moved out of the "national political laboratory" the mayor boasts that he has created in Cleveland. "These privately controlled companies are in quest of low wages, no unions, and tax giveaways. . . . They don't care how their decisions damage a community. They care only how those decisions fatten the profits in their corporate pocketbooks." Kucinich's solution? ". . . national legislation that forces companies to announce plant relocations years ahead of time (and) contribute financially to cities they abandon. . . ."
- The recall leaders. They were "sore losers, political hacks, and corrupt interests who are no longer welcome at City Hall," Kucinich said. "The recall [was] . . . an actual attempt to overthrow legitimate local government for the most illegitimate of reasons."
- Banks. Cleveland banks have failed to beat a path to the city's door to help it out of its latest financial crisis. "Cleveland's largest banks seem committed to destroying the city," Kucinich had said earlier in the month. "They won't buy Cleveland's bond offerings and they continue their systematic looting of Cleveland's financial resources in pursuit of maximum profit elsewhere in this country and overseas. . . . It's time they put a priority on their own backyard, even if they can't make the same extraordinary profits as they do elsewhere. . . . [Otherwise] a tremendous uprising of anger and bitterness will be directed against them." Indeed, threatened the mayor, he personally intended to "severely hamper normal business operations of the banks . . . the government has a whole range of options that have never been used."

At 31, the mayor is a 10-year veteran of Cleveland's often fratricidal political wars. First elected to the city council in 1969, Kucinich has been on the public payroll ever since, including a stint as clerk of Cleveland municipal court, an elective office. He was elected mayor in 1977. And because Kucinich has been around so long, his "new urban populism" has some concrete meanings for those who live or work in Cleveland—not something the mayor mentions in his speeches.

For example, Kucinich's political career is built on the ugly foundation of racist politics. His political strength lies in Cleveland's heavily ethnic west and south sides. To get elected to the city council in 1969, he had to pander to the antiblack sentiments of his constituents at a time when Cleveland's Carl Stokes was the first black mayor of a major American city. Kucinich supporters in that race branded his opponent a "nigger lover." Later, in several futile campaigns for Congress, Kucinich continued to use this tactic. In 1974, for example, he had leaflets passed out that stated accusingly that his opponent, Representative Ron Mottl—a vigorous foe of "forced busing"—supported a national holiday for Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday. To survive the recent recall election, his supporters spread, on the west side, the false rumor that George Forbes, Cleveland's black city council president, would be appointed interim mayor if Kucinich was recalled.

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"Dennis had a lot of potential but the word 'expedient' always played a major role in his political life," Earle Turner, a young black councilman, has observed. "Unfortunately for Cleveland, he used that potential to play racial politics and further divide our city. . . . Kucinich's claim in his Washington speech that he has united blacks and whites in Cleveland on economic issues is a joke. He has become a vindictive little man . . . who cruelly plays on the fears and prejudices of his white supporters."

The "new urban populism" has also meant official harassment and intimidation of Kucinich's political enemies. So sure was Kucinich of the people's genuine support that he sent city police detectives knocking on the doors of those who signed the recall petition to interrogate them as to whether they had really signed a petition against their mayor. "People are going to jail," threatened Kucinich as he unleashed the police. Yet the police uncovered none of the fraud the mayor was certain had occurred. Councilman William Sullivan, a vocal Kucinich critic, found his ward stripped of vital city services, such as snow removal during the bitter winter of 1978, and —just in case anyone missed the message—Kucinich was publicly quoted by one of his close aides as having ordered the "punishing" of Sullivan and his constituents.

For all his talk about populism, Kucinich's reaction to the filing of the recall petitions was remarkably similar to that of the last big-city mayor to face a determined recall effort, Frank Rizzo of Philadelphia: To hell with a vote; call my lawyers and let's go to court. Which Kucinich did. Indeed, he bragged that he would keep the recall tied up in the courts for "years." But even though he had the city's law department working overtime to save him (Kucinich, unlike Richard Nixon, didn't hire his own lawyers), the delay was measured in months. After less than a year in office, Kucinich once again faced the voters, and emerged with a 276-vote margin of victory.

Consistency is not one of the trademarks of Kucinich's "new urban populism." For example, during his campaign for mayor, Kucinich sharply criticized his opponent, who advocated calling out the National Guard in the event of a police or firefighters strike. Yet when Cleveland police staged a 19-hour wildcat strike last spring, Kucinich panicked and not only tried to get the National Guard sent into Cleveland but even called Jimmy Carter to see whether the U.S. Army was available.

In February of this year, Kucinich criticized his predecessor's financial policies: "The previous administration promised that it would not increase taxes, and sold the city assets to pay the bills instead of bringing spending into line . . . I can say there will be no tax increase while all city assets are retained." By July, however, the mayor was proposing to sell city land to satisfy a $20 million federal court judgment against it by the Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company.

THE LATEST SCHEME TO rescue Cleveland from bankruptcy involves a shaky $50 million bond issue proposed for this month. But there are a lot of "ifs" involved. The scheme will go through only if the city council approves (the same city council Kucinich referred to last April as "buffoons" and "lunatics"); if the city can comply with federal securities regulations requiring a full disclosure of its financial condition (a previous financing plan was cancelled last summer because the city could not comply); if enough individual investors or speculators can be attracted to the city's 10 percent bonds (institutional investors have been scared off by the city's poor credit rating); and if the bond issue can be financed without a property tax increase (Cleveland voters won't approve a property tax increase and the city can't raise taxes without such a vote unless it gets the approval of the two other independent taxing authorities in the area—Cuyahoga County and the financially hard-pressed Cleveland School District, neither of which views the city's plight with much sympathy). If, for any reason, the $50 million bond issue doesn't work out, Cleveland will have to default on the notes that come due on December 15. The Cleveland banks that hold those notes have already served notice they don't intend to refinance them.

Kucinich believes the banks are in a conspiracy against him. He has attacked them in terms reminiscent of Abe Beame and has even gone Beame one better. Kucinich has had Cleveland apply for a federal Economic Development Administration grant to investigate the "long-range feasibility of a city-owned and operated bank." Jimmy Carter and Congress have the Federal Reserve to cover their deficit; why shouldn't Cleveland, Kucinich figures, have its own bank for the same purpose? It is possible, of course, that no one will put money in the city's bank. After all, the city did manage to misplace all those bond proceeds. And if there's no money in its bank, then even the city's own bank can't buy the city's notes and bonds.

Such a possibility has occurred to Kucinich, too, and he already has an alternative: One of the major frontiers of the "new urban populism," according to Kucinich, will be for local government to take over "economic planning and capital allocation decisions." How? By using the $500 billion in private pension funds throughout the country. "We are talking," says Kucinich, "about using the people's money and putting it to work on behalf of people." If the federal government can run GSA, Medicare, and the Postal Service, administer the social security system, operate a few railroads, maintain military bases throughout the world, and misplace only $7 billion a year at HEW, surely local government is capable of properly spending all of that private pension money. "We have to begin now," says Kucinich, "to develop social guidelines for the constructive utilization of those funds."

In the sixties, a lot of young people looked back with nostalgia to JFK and thought that their objections to government would disappear if men like LBJ or Daley, whom they perceived as the "problem," were replaced. So they waited, sometimes patiently, sometimes not, for their generation's turn. Kucinich, who counted both Kennedy *and* Daley as heroes, was waiting with them. And while he waited, he found time to read Carl Sandburg, whom he quoted, Kennedy style, in his National Press Club speech, to illustrate his "new urban populism":

> *When I, the People learn to remember,*
> *when I, the People, use the lessons*
> *of yesterday and no longer forget who*
> *robbed me last year, who played me for*
> *a fool—then there will be no speaker*
> *in all the world to say the name: "The*
> *People," with any fleck of a sneer*
> *in his voice or any far-off*
> *smile of derision.*

Sadly for Cleveland, Kucinich didn't spend enough time reading Thomas Jefferson: "Whenever a man has cast a longing eye on offices, a rottenness begins in his conduct." ❑

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Trading in Repression: BRAZIL

By PENNY LERNOUX

Brazil exports fascism along with coffee beans.

"Insecurity insures security" in the brave new world of Latin America, and anyone who doubts it may find himself in jail.

Originally coined by Brazil's generals, the slogan has caught on in a dozen Latin American countries where military regimes terrorize the populace in the name of national security [*INQUIRY*, Nov. 27, 1978]. The pioneer of this "doctrine of national security" (as the prototype is known), Brazil's 14-year-old military dictatorship is also a classic case for the old saw that if communism did not exist, we would have to invent it to defend the Free World.

As elsewhere in Latin America, in Brazil anyone who questions the system is a communist—meaning most people. Any attempt to change the system is crushed with brutal force as a "communist conspiracy." Such was the case of the rural cooperatives sponsored by the Catholic Church in Paraguay, which were wiped out by military forces during 1975–1976. Three thousand people were arrested; several died under torture. The cooperative movement was destroyed, said Paraguay's bishops, not because they posed a communist threat, as President Alfredo Stroessner claimed, but because they were independent of the state. A similar reign of terror took place in northern Nicaragua in 1976–1977 for much the same reasons. According to U.S. Capuchin missionaries living in the area, 224 peasants were massacred by Nicaragua's national guard, which doubles as army and police. Hundreds more were forced to flee their homes.

There is method in such repression. "Frequently hundreds of armed security personnel will occupy a given city, village or agricultural area, searching all houses and taking into custody hundreds of innocent persons," explained Antonio Morales, a former mayor of San Salvador and outspoken opponent of El Salvador's military regime. "The majority of those arrested are freed within a few days, sometimes paying a small fine, other times paying no fine at all. The objective of these operations is not crime prevention but, rather, to instill terror among the population as a whole. In this way people come to accept the violation of their human rights as something inevitable, a force which cannot be resisted. When the people are released from jail, the authorities act as if they were giving them a gift by restoring their freedom."

The Brazilian regime, in particular, has fine-tuned this sense of insecurity to the point where most Brazilians would not dream of protesting (there are exceptions, of course, including university students, labor leaders, and the Catholic Church). Because of the military's constant worry about letting down its guard—subversives lurk everywhere—there are periodic, large-scale arrests to sustain the level of fear. Hence the arrest of 28,403 Brazilians "on suspicion" in São Paulo during the first two months of 1977 alone. In a recent poll on political attitudes, for example, younger Brazilians had much more difficulty than their elders in defining democracy, since they had no political reference but dictatorship. Some actually believed that democracy was "a kind of government in which the army, navy and air force share power." The Chilean military and secret police similarly launched their program of mass imprisonment and torture as much to force the population into psychological submission as to root out any real "communist threat." If the system endures long enough, the population can be progressively weaned of such old-fashioned ideas as democracy and freedom.

Washington once gave its quiet support to the anticommunist purges by its military allies in Latin America. Although the Carter administration frowns on the worst excesses of these regimes, Washington's attitude no longer matters so much. For example, Brazil, which used to be heavily dependent on U.S. arms manufacturers, now produces 75 percent of its own munitions. Only their navy continues to rely on U.S. suppliers, and if there is any reluctance on Washington's part, the Brazilians can always buy in Europe. With a $2 billion-plus annual defense budget and its own arms export industry, the Brazilian government can afford to tell Washington to "stuff" its arms handouts, as it did last year after the State Department issued a report on human rights violations in Brazil.

Working through licensing agreements with U.S. and European firms, Brazilian industry is producing West German antitank Cobra missiles, the Belgian 7.62 NATO Round FN rifle, the French Roland surface-to-surface missile, the Italian 9-mm Beretta submachine gun, the British Argus 700 minicomputer system for naval weapons, and armored personnel carriers. Brazil also is producing a subsonic military jet trainer called the Xavante under a licensing agreement with Italy's Aermacchi, helicopters

This is the second installment of a two-part article. EDITORS

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with France's Aerospatiale and Britain's Westland, structural parts for Northrop's F-5E Fighters, and a twin-engine turboprop called the Bandeirante.

The Brazilian military, it appears, would have no qualms about using its power against its neighbors if they got out of hand. According to a secret document prepared at Brazil's Advanced War College, entitled General Orientation for National Security Planning, "If communism reaches power in any Latin American country, or if the situation is aggravated by the intensification of revolutionary war, the frontier with Uruguay and therefore also the Rio Grande do Sud; the frontier with Bolivia, particularly the Corumbá-Cáceres zone; and the frontiers with Venezuela and Guyana constitute strategic areas and even eventual zones of intervention by Brazilian military power."

Brazil backs up its rhetoric with a plan to form a 7000-man parachute brigade with 48 Lockheed C-130 Hercules transport planes that could operate anywhere in Latin America in 48 hours.

Currently, however, Brazil has no worries about "communist" tendencies among its neighbors. Indeed, the Brazilian regime already has given more than a little help to its friends, supporting coups in 1971 in Bolivia and in 1973 in Uruguay. Two Brazilian air force planes loaded with arms were flown to the city of Santa Cruz in eastern Bolivia, which has sizable Brazilian interests, to aid General Hugo Banzer in his successful right-wing putsch. Just in case Banzer needed any extra help, the Airborne Joint Brigade of Corumbá, Second Army Corps, under General Ramiro Gonçalves Lima, was lined up along the Brazilian-Bolivian frontier and at some points even inside Bolivian territory. A week after Banzer took power, Brazil repaid the allegiance of the Santa Cruz ranchers by granting them a $5 million loan. The Bank of Brazil advanced a similar amount to the Banzer government, and simultaneously launched an expensive publicity campaign throughout the country with the slogan: "Bolivia, you can count on me!—Bank of Brazil, S.A." Banzer not only counted on the bank but on the Brazilian military as well, which sold him tanks, arms, and 18 Xavante jet fighters.

Uruguay was saved from outright Brazilian occupation in 1971 only because a left-wing coalition known as the Broad Front failed to win the country's presidential elections, thereby eliminating the necessity for Brazil's Thirty-Hour Operation. But according to Wilson Ferreira Aldunate, head of the centrist Uruguayan National Party and the real winner of the elections, the end result was much the same, since Uruguay's armed forces had Brazilian support in both preparing and carrying out their putsch, including Brazilian fuel and transportation supplies during a general labor strike protesting the military takeover. Uruguayan police agents belonging to the country's death squad also received training and arms from Brazil.

Chile's generals were the recipients of similar Brazilian know-how, particularly in the weeks following the 1973 coup, when Brazilian agents taught their Chilean counterparts new techniques in torture and surveillance. Both Chile and Uruguay purchased Brazilian aircraft, and Chile bought $2 million worth of army supplies from the Brazilian firm, Diana Paolucci. Brazil also is marketing armored carriers to Bolivia, Paraguay, Chile, and Peru.

One result of this mutual aid society has been the regionalization of terror, from Washington to Buenos Aires, with no place to hide—safely. Hundreds of political refugees have been assassinated in exile, including General Carlos Prats, head of the Chilean armed forces under Allende, who was murdered with his wife in Buenos Aires; former Bolivian President Juan José Torres, who was overthrown by Banzer, also killed in Argentina; and two prominent Uruguayan senators, Zelmar Michelini and Hector Gutierrez Ruiz, who were kidnapped and murdered in Buenos Aires. Bernardo Leighton, a founder of Chile's Christian Democratic Party and one of the most distinguished Chileans of his generation, narrowly survived an assassination attempt in Rome. Orlando Letelier, Allende's foreign minister and a former Chilean ambassador to the United States, was less fortunate. He was killed in Washington, D.C. by right-wing Cuban exiles working for DINA, the Chilean secret police.

In addition to regional assassinations and kidnappings, there are regular exchanges of political prisoners among Latin American governments, such as the 32 Bolivian tin miners who were exiled to a police camp in southern Chile, and the body brigade that shuffles corpses across the River Plate between Uruguay and Argentina. When 10 manacled, mutilated corpses showed up on the river banks of Uruguay, the government at first claimed they were Orientals, a play on the country's name, the Oriental Republic, but later admitted that the dead were Uruguayans, probably among those disappearing weekly from their homes or jobs in Argentina.

Whatever may be said of the Brazilian regime, it does care about appearances, and therefore has made some effort to distinguish itself from its crasser counterparts in Chile, Uruguay, and Argentina. Unlike Argentina, where almost everyone seems to have had some experience of repression, Brazil gives the casual visitor the impression of tranquility. There is no Graham Greene atmosphere of police thugs lurking in the shadows—the police apparatus is too well oiled for that. Only by studying the system of repression, the absence of human rights, does the visitor begin to perceive the profile of the monster; but there are so many more pleasant things to look at—the golden beaches of Rio, the money in São Paulo, *carnaval,* the women—that almost no one wants to bother.

IN ARGENTINA AND URUGUAY, IN CONtrast, fear is so palpable that you can almost touch it. Everyone has a horror story to tell—conservative businessman, liberal lawyer, and left-wing student; Jew, Catholic, Jehovah's Witness, and atheist. Amnesty International estimates that approximately 20,000 Argentines have been detained or have "disappeared" since July 1976. One out of 60 Uruguayans has been arrested, and some 2000 Uruguayans, representing an entire generation of political leaders, have been deprived of their political rights. More than 300,000 Uruguayans have fled the country. No one is immune from the midnight knock on the door, so indiscriminate is the terror.

If Brazil is the prototype of Latin America's new militarism, Argentina represents the apogee of that totalitarianism. Carried to its logical conclusion, the doctrine of national security necessitates a war on the local populace, and this is what has happened in Argentina, where a military campaign to wipe out left-wing guerrillas ended in generalized violence. Thuggery—for blackmail, for vengeance, or just for the fun of it—was institutionalized on a nationwide scale by the Videla junta, with the result that

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killing and torture have become ends in themselves. As one Argentine general succinctly put it: "No one can be neutral or ambivalent. Some will succumb for being indifferent. Others will be shot as collaborators." Or in the memorable words of General Benjamin Menendez, commander of the Third Army Corps in Córdoba and its notorious concentration camps: "While (President) Videla governs, I kill!"

Underlying this bloodthirsty boast is the military's belief that it is engaged in a total war. As the Jesuit magazine *Mensaje* pointed out, "Anyone who is not a trusted ally, anyone who does not have a 'good conduct pass,' is suspect as an undercover agent who somehow is or might be in league with the enemy, and who therefore has to be destroyed or neutralized."

To rationalize the need to wage such a "dirty war," Argentine officers frequently cite French doctrines of counter-insurgency, particularly in reference to Algeria's struggle for independence in the 1950s. (A number of political prisoners reported that they were tortured by Argentine veterans of the Algerian war.) But as three French generals wrote Argentine President Videla, such methods could lead to a form of war inconsistent with military methods and traditions—characterized by kidnappings, torture, and long periods of imprisonment without trial. We know from our own experience, they said, that military men sometimes described the disagreements normal to democracy as "subversion."

Typical of the "inconsistent" methods used by the military on thousands of Argentines was the experience of Dr. Laura Bonaparte, an Argentine psychology professor, and her daughter Aida. A teacher who worked in a slum school near Buenos Aires, Aida was kidnapped by the military in December 1975, apparently because she had organized a committee of neighbors to help the families of those who had been wounded during an army bombardment of the slum. Dr. Bonaparte appealed for help from the Catholic Church, police and military headquarters, and former Argentine senators and representatives. She also filed dozens of petitions of *habeas corpus*, to no avail. Finally, in desperation, she joined other relatives of political prisoners in a demonstration in front of the 601st Army Battalion headquarters. "Through the gates, we yelled the names of our sons and daughters, hoping that the guards would tell us if they were being held in that prison," she said. An officer told them to go to the Avellaneda Cemetery in Buenos Aires and request a list of the dead. "The odor was unbearable," she recalled, "and I did not have the strength to continue. Five blocks before the cemetery I turned and left."

On January 8, 1976, Dr. Bonaparte received an official notification that Aida had "died in a confrontation." "They also provided me with the number of a jar, number 24, which I was supposed to request at La Plata police headquarters. My daughter's hands were in that jar, and they wanted me to identify her through that." Through two army officers Dr. Bonaparte later learned that her daughter had been raped and shot to death, together with other prisoners. "The executions were performed under orders from the minister of the interior, General Albano Harguindeguy," she said. "The prisoners' corpses were piled up and later dismembered."

Aida's husband was killed by the military in March 1976; Dr. Bonaparte's husband was abducted that June. In September a sister-in-law and her husband disappeared, and in May 1977, Dr. Bonaparte's other daughter, Irene, and her husband were kidnapped from their home in Buenos Aires, leaving behind two baby sons. Dr. Bonaparte was able to give testimony of these events in a letter to Representative Donald Fraser (D.-Minn.) only because she had fled Argentina for exile in Mexico and most of her family were presumed dead. Countless other Argentines who suffered similar barbarities were afraid to tell their stories because they or their relations would be marked for revenge.

LATIN AMERICANS WHO ARE LIVING this nightmare have little hope of its ending. Most of the political parties are demoralized or in disarray, including the left. Even such well-organized, broad-based movements as the Christian Democrats in Chile have been unable to drive a wedge in the military fortress. Pragmatic Chileans say the most that can be expected in the intermediate future is a change in dictators to a general more flexible than Pinochet.

Perhaps because there is so little hope, many Latin Americans have idealized President Carter as a political magician who has only to snap his fingers and, presto, no more dictatorship. But this bears no relationship to political or economic reality. True, a number of military regimes have released political prisoners—including the Stroessner government in Paraguay and the Pinochet dictatorship—but these are purely cosmetic changes. As any Paraguayan or Chilean can attest, the system of repression has not changed.

Moreover, there is a limit to the influence that Washington can exert. It is one thing for the Carter administration to intimate reprisals in the Dominican Republic if elections are not respected, as was the case in the recent contest between the country's perennial president, Joaquin Balaguer, and the successful challenger, Antonio Guzman. But the Dominican Republic is a small Caribbean nation geographically close to the United States, with a long tradition of U.S. intervention and an economy almost totally dependent on U.S. sugar quotas. Even if the Carter administration wanted to apply such pressures, they would not work with such countries as Brazil and Argentina, which are no longer so dependent on U.S. aid that they would change their most fundamental policies simply to suit the whim of the North Americans. In any case, some aid still flows, and President Carter has specifically declined to impose harsher economic sanctions against recalcitrant Latin American regimes. As he reassured the Brazilians during a recent visit, "It would be inconceivable to me that any act of Congress would try to restrict the lending of money by American private banks to Brazil under any circumstances."

Contrary to the oft-repeated expectation—and fear—of American liberals that the people of Latin America will rise up in a revolution of desperation, the probability of such a conflagration is just about as likely as U.S. economic sanctions against Brazil. While the standard of living of the average Latin American has worsened considerably during the past decade, military repression has prevented the growth of organized or spontaneous protest. People are more aware of the causes of their misery, thanks to the transistor radio and to the consciousness-raising programs of the region's increasingly critical Catholic Church. But they are also more afraid. And as Brazil's Archbishop Helder Camara points out, "People who have no reasons for living certainly will not find causes for dying." ❑

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THE COUP, by John Updike. New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 320 pp., $8.95.

Lyric and loving

ANTHONY BURGESS

T. S. ELIOT SAID THAT meaning was only one of the parameters under which a poem should be considered, and perhaps not a very important one. Meaning, in fact, could be thrown like a bone to the dogs of reason while the construct did its irrational work, a kind of burgling of the unconscious. With John Updike's new construct the plot is a small bone for worrying, while the circumambient meat is red, veiny, yellow-fatted. Here, Towser, is the bone. Good dog.

There is an imaginary African territory called Kush (low Arabic, I seem to remember, for the female genitalia), very large though small for Africa, landlocked, south of the Sahara, agonized by drought. Its dictator is Colonel Hakim Félix Elleloû, a former soldier of the colonizing French and student at a small Wisconsin college. He is a Muslim and has the statutory four wives, observes the five daily *waktu*, and keeps away from alcohol. He is driven round in an air-conditioned silver Mercedes. He rules over a hungry state that officially professes a kind of Islamicized Marxism and houses in bunkers at its borders a Soviet missile team. Hakim, or Félix, detests America but is haunted by it. America generously unlades megatons of junk food for starving Kush. Hakim scornfully rejects it. He even incinerates a whole mountain of breakfast crispies with the American functionary assigned to its delivery on top, a stoic strawberry. But, whether he will or not, American influence creeps in, American know-how prevails, and junk food, served to the accompaniment of Patti Page and Fats Domino on dining-booth–operated juke boxes, proclaims the ineluctable consumer revolution. When Hakim goes into exile as a short-order cook, the five-year-awaited rains come. He ends up in Nice on pension, writing his memoirs in the style of John Updike, whom he imitates with exceptional skill. In his alternation of first and third person narration he also imitates John Fowles's *Daniel Martin*. It is a remarkable prose performance and highly poetic.

It is 13 years since I last reviewed a novel—novella, rather: *Of the Farm*

BRUCE MCGILLIVRAY

ANTHONY BURGESS is the author of many novels, including A Clockwork Orange. *His latest book is* 1985, *published by Little, Brown.*

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—by John Updike, but I have read all his prose works, not always however in English. I have bought them in Italian and French and picked up the odd paperback in English while on brief but lonely academic missions to the United States. If I have not read as much of his poetry as I should have liked, it is because publishers in Paris and Turin seem to shy at its translation, and it is not much around in American drugstores. But I am told, I think without malice, that to read his prose is to read his poetry, and I am prepared to believe it. The copy of *The Coup* that I have read is an uncorrected proof, and I am severely enjoined not to quote from it "without comparison with the finally revised text"—which does not seem, at this moment of reviewing, to be available. This emboldens me to set some of Updike's prose as verse, making such small emendations as are necessary to regularize the rhythm:

The piste *diminished to*
a winding track,
Treacherously pitted, strewn
with flinty scrabble
That challenged well the mettle
of our Michelin
Steel-belted radials. Distances
grew bluish;
As we rose higher, clots of vegetation,
Thorny and leafless, troubled
with grasping roots
The rocks. In the declivities
that broke
Our grinding, twisting ascent,
there were signs
Of pasturage: clay trampled to
a hardened
Slurry by hooves, and also excrement
Distinguishable still from
mineral matter,
Some toppled skeletons of
beehive huts,
Consumed their thatches as
a desperate fodder.
Aristada, which thrives on overgrazed
Lands, tinged with green this
edge of desolation.

The boundaries between verse and prose are, in our age, most uncertain. I am happy to find in Updike's work an undoubted traditional verse movement modestly disguised as prose, rather than the opposite, which we find too often in vaunted slim volumes. This is a fat volume, and it is full of poetry of a beautifully recognizable kind on a large number of subjects—the African landscape in all its aspects, women's shoulderblades, the refrigerator snack after the hour of love, the blood-gush at the severing of a head, Pepsi and Coke, hideous malty Ovaltine, leather, a fly's flight. There is a large lyric love of the surface of the world, in which the practice of visual notation conjoins with a great verbal gift—perhaps the greatest among Americans now that Nabokov is dead. The only trouble with the practice of this gift in the novel is that it may reverse priorities, making the static examination more important than the thrust of plot. But I cannot really be sure that the swift movement of narrative should come first, especially when it is the most prized aspect of the brutal or sentimental best seller.

Wyndham Lewis was another considerable novelist who was also a visual artist. He proclaimed as a fictional virtue that exterior point of view that turned characters into well-wrought automata, reluctant to relinquish the cubes of space they were set in. The eating of a shrimp on toast in *The Apes of God* seems a massive mechanical undertaking effected with wheels and levers of solid Edwardian manufacture. Updike avoids that heaviness, but he is committed to a Lewislike stasis that springs from the same lust to describe at length, missing no wart or follicle. But he is so lyrically joyful, even when presenting a bloody act of execution (Félix committing regicide), that he seems weightless. Nevertheless he is committed also to a kind of poetic unit, a verse paragraph that, in certain contexts of action and even speech, seems excessively long. And there is a basic melody that seems to require otiose adjectives:

> . . . a poster of Elvis Presley in full sequinned regalia, Marilyn Monroe from a bed of polar bear skins making upwards at the lens the crimson O of a kiss whose mock emotion led her to close her greasy eyelids, and a page torn from that magazine whose hearty name of *Life* did not save it from dying.

That *hearty* is surely unnecessary (and perhaps, in his correction of the proofs, Updike has seen it to be so, but I am prepared to bet not), yet without the adjective the prosody falters. His music insists on richly periodic sentences and a formal balance of epithets. This does not apply in *The Coup* solely to the récit: his Africans talk like books, though his Americans can be earthy enough. If this, and his other imaginative prose works, can be

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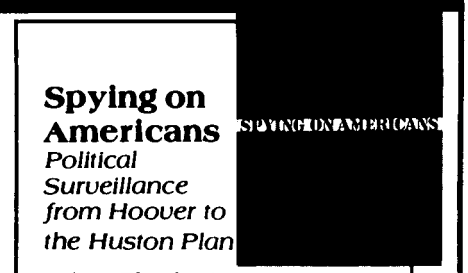

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designated novels, then we have to expand the boundaries of the form, making it accommodate a tissage of lyric utterances whose pretexts are fictional events.

BUT THERE IS MORE THAN poetry in Updike: there is thought—close, basic, original, civilized, terribly intelligent. Ideas, not actions, are the foil to his lyricism. Félix, for instance, insists that French literature more than French political thought is the colonialist's gift to Africa—the dryness of Ronsard and the ironic hopelessness of Villon. (It is hard to imagine an African who thinks this way turning himself into a dictator.) Updike is fascinated by religion and, as *A Month of Sundays* showed, can preach an astonishing sermon:

> It may be that in the attenuation, desiccation, and death of religions the world over, a new religion is being formed in the indistinct hearts of men, a religion without a God, without prohibitions and compensatory assurances, a religion whose antipodes are motion and stasis, whose one rite is the exercise of energy, and in which exhausted forms like the quest, the vow, the expiation, and the attainment through suffering of wisdom are, emptied of content, put in the service of a pervasive expenditure whose ultimate purpose is entropy.

Entropy—magic American word, as old as Henry Adams and as new as Pynchon. Félix and his fellow Muslims brood on the significance of an Allah without attributes (no attributes = no God?) with a relish matched only by their readiness to quote the Koran. The *surahs* are cited in English, implying a concern with the semantics of what the Prophet preached—whereas my own Far Eastern experience leads me to believe that non-Arabic Muslims regard the texts as mere tongue-curling and fishbone-clearing spells. There is too much intelligence as there is too much eloquence. There is, one might say had one the courage, too much Updike and too few personages realized from their own distinct withinness as opposed to their miraculously rendered (especially with the four wives) physical attributes.

And what, for the book club member who doesn't give much of a damn about poetry, can this novel offer? A nostalgic evocation of the hopeful fifties, pre-Watergate Nixon, and a look back at Ike. The African or black American consciousness as caught by a white man. A very shrewd and well-informed summation of the impossibility of a rapprochement between Third World need and American generosity. All those corn flakes—and the goats' udders dry. A fury of agricultural thaumaturgy, the grazing grounds plucked to nothing by cattle that forget how to wander. American good will unqualified by awareness of the terrible depths of the human heart (this is before My Lai and *Time*'s shamed rediscovery of the principle of evil). The novel is bound to fail as dialectic, since its principal voice as it were *contains* America, foreknows most of the answers, submits at the start to a kind of hopelessness. And the hopelessness is fulfilled at the end, as we know it has to be, by the cheerful American conquest of Africa. American technology is far superior to Soviet. Even the decollated head of the late king of Kush, which speaks prophecies in a cave much visited by tourists, is heavier than it need be, since it is packed with Russian electronics: it would be feather-light had it been U.S.—transistorized. The Russians are lumpish and suspicious, the Americans light-stepped and eager.

That *The Coup* (a name combining eagles and doves) is, beneath the elaborate and lovely poetry, a true statement about "neo-colonialism" one cannot doubt. But it is an even truer statement—though self-confessedly distilled through reading as much as observation—about the intractabilities of Africa, the brute facts of geography (or *National Geographic*, to which Updike pays due acknowledgment), and the terrible inequality in the distribution of the world's resources. It is finally a sour-mouthed hymn to the United States, where men are so fat that they must jog and cut down on peanut butter—thus undercutting Kush's sole export—and where, whether we like it or not, the patterns of our age have been, and are still being, forged. Africa, and the world, will be saved by American technological lust and junk food. But all this is nothing compared with the brilliant verbal celebration of surfaces. If Updike does not feel inclined to temper his poetic ebullience to the end of producing what James and Conrad called a novel, that is his own affair. Faced as we are with a fall and winter flood of American junk fiction, in which the lexis is mostly street obscenity and the events orgasms, perhaps we ought to be grateful for such self-indulgent magic and elegance. ❏

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Talking with John Updike

CHARLIE REILLY

Q: IN ONE OF YOUR INTERviews you said, "We're not going to get anyone like Hemingway for awhile, someone who so intensely and instinctively cared about language. Instead you get showmen and professors." What kind of shape do you see contemporary fiction in?

UPDIKE: To really see it well I'd have to read more of it than I do. Although I review some new books, I spend most of my time trying to continue to learn to be a writer, and the very nature of my attempt to become a serious American writer precludes my studying much serious American fiction.

I do read, however, any new work produced by people like Bellow, Cheever, Malamud, and Philip Roth—and if Salinger were to produce one, I think a lot of us would fall upon it avidly. These names are dated perhaps, but perhaps my own reading is a little dated. Anyway, when I hear my own remarks quoted back to me, I find it hard to disentangle myself from the natural sensation we all have that things were somehow better before than has actually been the historical reality. But I think there is no doubt that since the twenties cultural fashion has regarded fiction a good deal less reverently. It was fashionable at that time, in other words, to flatter and support people trying to become writers, and there seemed to be a much healthier market as well. Not only, I think, did fiction have proportionately more of the book market, but there were certainly more magazines printing fiction.

Today if the *New Yorker* sends some-

CHARLIE REILLY teaches at Montgomery County Community College in Blue Bell, Pennsylvania. An expanded version of this conversation will appear in his book of interviews with modern authors, to be published next year.

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thing back, what do you do with it? You send it to *Playboy*—at least that's what I do—and if *Playboy* sends it back, you're reduced either to the little magazines who can't pay or to the slick magazines that you can't quite write for. I'm just rereading the letters of our fellow Pennsylvanian, John O'Hara, and couldn't help but notice the spate of magazines he was working with. He happened to hop onto the *New Yorker* bandwagon when it was starting to roll, but he also worked with *Scribner's,* the *Post, Collier's,* and a number of others—and that was just a generation ago.

I'm making a long answer out of what maybe should be a short one, but I do cling to my sensation that today it is a little harder to bring to fiction the kind of intensity it needs to produce masterpieces. Also, it may well be that the great achievements of modernism in literature might have been based upon an unproven faith that a writer could, as Joyce said, forge the uncreated conscience of his race. And that seems out of fashion as well.

What I had in mind in the quote you cited was my conviction that Hemingway was trying in a very radical way to refurbish his prose and maintain a, well, continued literary gleam.

Q: You've written in so many forms—novels, poems, stories, essays, at least one play. And one of your poems, "Midpoint," seems to range over a variety of poetic forms, like Whitmanesque verse and heroic couplets. Do you see yourself primarily as a novelist?
UPDIKE: More and more I seem to be reduced to that, although I persist in writing short stories. As a matter of fact, now that I have finally gotten out from under *The Coup,* I am assembling my short stories of the last seven years. I hate to be judgmental in this regard—in fact, I don't know—but the short story might be what I do best. Certainly I feel quite comfortable with it, whereas with the novel I never know quite what is coming off and I always feel somewhat lacking.

The problem, I think, is when you write a novel you become aware of the enormous amount of, well, stuff you ought to know. When I have to compare short story writing with writing novels, I think of what happens to a box when you double the linear dimensions: you wind up with four times the volume—at least I think you do. What I am getting at is, the bigger the work, the more one has to put into it. But that's part of the excitement and charm, isn't it: seeing if you can fill the box.

The beauty of writing a novel is that you don't have anyone looking over your shoulder, you're not trying to screen material through a magazine editor. Perhaps I flatter myself, but I think my publishers at this point would print anything I sent down to them, as long as it isn't the product of a deranged mentality. So, I guess I do want to work primarily on my novels.

The poetry has pretty well withered. I began as a poet and loved writing it, loved seeing it in print, and I'm sorry I don't write more of it. I even regret that I don't write more verse solely to please myself. The last spate of poems that was successful occurred in Spain. I took my mother, who is a longtime Hispanophile, and my younger daughter to Spain for a week. I suffered a terrible jet lag and in my lonely hotel room I began to write a sonnet a day about each day. They were published in the *New Yorker* a year ago and they seem to be the best thing I've ever done.

But who knows what the future will bring? Occasionally, I see myself as an old man writing poetry, having that kind of flowering John Hall Wheelock had.

Q: But you do see yourself "inclining," at least, toward the novel?
UPDIKE: Definitely.

Q: Now that I think of it, you've said that your play, Buchanan Dying, *started off as a novel, and ultimately you even seemed to measure it against a novel.*
UPDIKE: Correct, and it's still in my mind to transform it into a novel. I just found myself at that point overwhelmed by the things I didn't know. Henry James discussed just this at one point. He said when you write about the past you're just torturing yourself because you can never really know what people thought; you can barely determine what they wore. So, my present novel, *The Coup,* is set in Africa, and this time I tried to *utilize* my ignorance, to make it a kind of veil.

Q: I'm curious about the way you compose. For example, when you're working, do you go directly onto a typewriter?
UPDIKE: No, and I really don't recommend such a method. As a rule, I do a lot of my first work in longhand. I find I can usually work with book reviews, sometimes short stories, on a typewriter. But when dealing with something the length and scope of a novel, I find it helps to have that quiet little operation of a pencil, and an eraser, on paper. The problem with this method is you find yourself stuck with a manuscript that only you can type—and typing frequently becomes a form of revision that adds months to the process. So, although I occasionally will switch to the typewriter for a passage or two, most of my original work is done by hand.

Q: And, as you say, you revise in the process of typing?
UPDIKE: Right. Perhaps "tamper" is an appropriate and honorable word. At the same time, one has to keep in

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mind that, although you're trying to get it "right," you don't want to become so hung up in your search for instant perfection that you disrupt whatever flow might develop. Frequently it helps to put the manuscript away for a time so when you come back to it you have a fresh eye. Of course, you never stop fussing. I'm working on the proofs of *The Coup* right now, and that has suffered I don't know how many readings and revisions.

Q: This is the new work, the one set in Africa?

UPDIKE: That's correct. It's the sort of book that, if it's going to be right at all, it should be kind of exquisite, it should chime. There's a kind of echoing effect that I attempt in the novel, so I find myself constantly, well, adjusting valves and fretting over small things like repeating adjectives over a space of many pages. It's been a fussy sort of book.

Q: I've reread most of your novels and found myself, the second time through, very moved by the two Rabbit *books. I was particularly impressed by your use of the catastrophe: in* Rabbit, Run *the death of the baby, in* Redux *the immolation of Jill. First, am I correct in assuming that throughout the writing process of each novel you knew in advance that that particular character was going to be destroyed?*

UPDIKE: Yes. A writer has at least a dim sense of his plot as he begins and, unlike Nabokov or Faulkner, I am not very casual about killing off my characters. Violent death, indeed death of any sort, is a fairly unusual experience in my work, and I am generally reluctant to insert it. So it takes a lot out of me to kill a character.

I recall when I wrote the scene in *Rabbit, Run* where the baby dies, I was in Vermont. I had dreaded writing that particular episode for some time. Obviously, there was no real baby involved, only a few sentences and adjectives on some pieces of paper, but I had babies of my own at the time, and I found the prospect of writing about the infanticide unsettling. I wrote the scene virtually at a sitting. Actually, it was a very long day in which I composed, as I recall, 17 long pages that eventually were whittled down to about five. I never much changed that section either: I kept it in Janice's mind, I retained most of the words. So yes, writing that scene took a good deal out of me. And, yes, I knew from the start I wanted a catastrophe that would be surprising and shocking.

Q: And Jill's death in the fire in Rabbit Redux?

UPDIKE: I'm pleased you associated the two because the death of Jill was designed as a counterpart of sorts to the baby's death. Janice inadvertently kills an innocent in the first book, so Rabbit more or less presides over the destruction of an innocent in the second one. There's a kind of grisly balancing between the two. Each character strays—Rabbit in the first and Janice in the second—and their reconciliation is based at least in some way upon these, if you will, murders. So, I'm glad you responded positively to them, and I'm glad you sensed a connection.

Q: You subtitled Marry Me *a "romance" to separate it from your more conventionally and uninterruptedly composed novels, and you called* Bech *a "book" because you conceived and wrote it piecemeal. Do you have a set of definitions about what constitutes a "novel" and what doesn't?*

UPDIKE: I suppose anything that is a compilation of book-length fictional prose by a single author qualifies, and sometimes I wonder if that isn't all there is to some novels. But I feel there is more to it. I feel that some of the long prose works that, oh, some of my fellow *New Yorker* writers produce are novels in name only. Personally, I'm rather pleased that no one can take an excerpt from a novel of mine and make it stand alone. It shows it really is a novel and not just a group of pieces.

I surely didn't mean to denigrate *Bech,* though, when I called it a "book"; in fact I think it has a number of admirable qualities. And I thoroughly enjoyed writing about Henry Bech. I write so often about middlebrow or lowbrow people that it was fun to write about someone at least as bright as I am, someone who lets me write without holding anything back. But the whole texture of the chapters of *Bech* was that of short stories, and I couldn't bring myself to call it a novel.

Q: Henry Bech has some rather dismal things to say about the agonies a writer must endure. Is it really that bleak? Do you find yourself tormented by bouts of depression, waves of unfavorable reviews, periods of stagnation?

UPDIKE: Alas, poor Bech. I just published another Bech story in the *New Yorker* and someone in fact sought me out to inquire whether being a writer is all that bad. Actually, it's a kind of happy unhappiness. I'm very happy being a writer, and despite his protests, I think Bech is too.

I do know some writers who could be described as stalled—you don't have to know many writers to meet such people—but although they're as stalled as Bech, they continue to enjoy most of the benefits of being a writer in our society. They seem to be able to generate that certain charisma writers are associated with and they manage to find people to admire them as artists. It's not so bad.

Bech's career, I think, is based to a degree on Salinger's, and I guess there is something of Kerouac in him too. He's a writer who has stopped writing. But keep in mind that Bech's novels, and the novels of other stalled writers, have not been forgotten. His problem is that he has to live with the consciousness that, even though he is famous and making money, he's no longer "doing his thing." I suppose he's kind of a modernist; perhaps I share his faults. Although Bech is 9 or 10 years older than I am, he wants it to be absoutely right and he frequently worries that nothing he does is quite good enough.

Q: You've been asked this before, but not for awhile. You so brilliantly resurrected Rabbit Angstrom and his warren in Rabbit Redux, *and in an interview you devised for the* New York Times, *Henry Bech predicted you would write at least one more* Rabbit *novel. Now that* The Coup *is behind you, are you considering going back to Rabbit?*

UPDIKE: I wonder whether I should try it again. You can muddy a good impression with a sequel, I think, and you run a very definite risk with a sequel to a sequel. An attractive possibility would be to create a tetralogy in the end that would have a massive nineteenth-century quality to it. But, if I did, it would be crucial that I maintained something of the right level throughout the works. To follow with a weaker book would be unfortunate.

I wrote *Rabbit Redux* at what was a fairly rapid pace and without too much reflection, and it seemed to, oh, take off. I became hypnotized by it, in other words, and I hope the reader did too. But because the novel did receive a number of kind reviews, and continues to receive them, one is additionally dubious about trying to do it again. For example, I should worry about whether I'm too removed now from

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the Pennsylvania milieu to do it right.

Q: You did say once that 1979 could be a good year to consider a third encounter with Rabbit, and at one point you did more or less sketch a tetralogy.

UPDIKE: That's true, I have kind of promised a tetralogy and I do tend to keep my promises. It will not be my next novel, though; I want to do something you could call a "New England novel" next. Put it this way: If Harry Angstrom and I both live into our sixties, that means I have a couple of decades to get back to him.

As you know, at one point I did have a rather elaborate quartet of books in mind, of which *Buchanan Dying* was to be the last. At the time my thought was to write one novel, like *Poorhouse Fair,* set in the future; another, *Rabbit, Run,* in the present; a third, *Centaur,* in the remembered past; and a fourth, in the historical past. Who knows what the future might bring?

Q: Do you have any enormous, long-range ambitions? I think of Joyce, who spent his last years muttering about an epic on the sea.

UPDIKE: True, but Joyce was a wonderful man for setting himself an impossible task and then doing it. You know, I think that when reviewers and critics search for "great writers," they tend to look for that type of massive production. It's a little intimidating to contemplate something like that, but this *Rabbit, Run* tetralogy has been some attempt at a "big book." Bigness as such is not a special problem for me—witness *Couples,* which was long and not terribly difficult to write—if I find the right places to locate. But at this precise moment I have no "big book" in mind—and, as you may remember, I would do well to keep in mind that Bech's career has foundered upon a tome he calls *Think Big.*

On the other hand, if I do have a future artistically, I do think it's with the novel. I don't think I can write better short stories than some I've already done, and lately I can't seem to write poems at all. So it is the novel I would like to work with, and the idea of producing a big one is intriguing.

But it would have to be one that deserved its bigness. Mann's *The Magic Mountain,* I think, and certainly Joyce's *Ulysses* grew from short stories, and whatever happens, I feel it important that such a book simply grow of its own accord. ❏

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CAN GOVERNMENT GO BANKRUPT? by Richard Rose and Guy Peters. Basic Books, 283 pp., $12.50.

Saving the state from itself

MURRAY N. ROTHBARD

WE HAVE COME TO expect from Basic Books a product unique in trade-book publishing: acute intelligence and thorough scholarship combined with readability. *Can Government Go Bankrupt?* can only devalue Basic's reputation. It is, in the first place, a piece of fluff, outrageously overpriced and overfootnoted compared to the flimsiness of its contents. Still worse is the misleading nature of its catchy title. It turns out that the book has absolutely nothing to do with bankruptcy as the term is known among both economists and the general public. (The answer to the title question, by the way, is, yes and no. Yes, for state and local governments, which are not politically able to tax their citizens enough to pay their debts; no, for central governments, which can always print enough money to assure such payment.)

Why Professors Rose and Peters are willing to engage in these tactics is quite clear: as hard-nosed political scientists and directors of "policy studies," they want now to go public to assure themselves as wide a readership as possible. Why Basic Books should be willing to debase the coinage of their reputation is less clear, but perhaps they find the ideology of the book so congenial that they are prepared to overlook the schlock nature of the content.

For Rose and Peters are neoconservative political scientists, and as such they have a simplistic message on which they ring the changes almost endlessly. The message is that if the government tries to do too much—as it has in recent years—it will become "politically bankrupt," i.e., it will lose its "authority" among the public. And that, Rose and Peters believe, is about the very worst thing that could happen in the whole world.

At first, the message seems sensible enough, if scarcely original, but here it is handled with boring repetition. For surely governments should not try to take on more than they can accomplish, should not run up expenses that will prove unacceptable when it comes time to collect taxes or to incur the deficits necessary to pay for them, etc. In handing out benefits to the public—and to themselves—governments do tend to undervalue or not to examine the costs. So words of caution, even if pretty banal and repetitious, are always useful, one would think. It is irritating, however, to see the authors bowdlerize the original Robert Heinlein phrase, "There ain't no such thing as a free lunch" (TANSTAAFL) to their own non-U motto, "There is no such thing as a free lunch." It is still more irritating for the authors to refer repeatedly to the "world recession of the 1970s" as making their message important, when that recession has been over for the past three years.

We've seen the state invoke its full "authority"—some of those results were the Gulag, Auschwitz, Hiroshima, Vietnam.

But there are far graver problems with the Rose-Peters thesis than those immediately evident. As neoconservatives they fully support the existing welfare-warfare state system. They raise no fundamental question about the system, and simply dismiss such criticisms as unthinkable. Just as the Keynesians of the 1930s declared "saving capitalism" to be their aim, so the neoconservatives of the 1970s are try-

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ing to save the welfare-warfare state from what they see as its remediable excesses. They want the current system, but they want it fixed up and buttoned down: a state that will be strengthened because more modest and more efficient in dispensing its benefits to one and all.

And so there is no real recognition by the authors that the welfare-warfare state, however modest at first, may have inherently cumulative effects; that what might seem to be moderate today may have crippling effects tomorrow, by hobbling production incentives or generating inflationary expectations among the public. Nor, of course, is there the slightest suggestion that perhaps the state and its backers have interests contrary to, let alone not identical with, the general run of the public. In short, Pluralism forbid that there be any hint that all states, now and forever, are necessarily run by a minority ruling class whose interests are antithetical to the rest of the population.

Quite the contrary. For Rose and Peters explicitly want the state to trim its sails so as to save itself: save it, not from revolution, which they do not consider a realistic option, but from the loss of political "authority," from "bankruptcy." What exactly is this terrible condition? It is, say the authors, "the tyranny of weakness," a condition where "citizens become indifferent to its [government's] demands and cease to rely on it to realize their wants. In a politically bankrupt regime the major division is not between different parties competing for office, but between those who are meant to govern and the mass of citizens indifferent to who governs."

So to Rose and Peters the ultimate horror is indifference, a lack of enthusiasm for one's government manifested in indifference to its commands. In a politically bankrupt world, the citizens try their best to avoid political edicts, which they conceive to be external to themselves, and to escape paying taxes as best they can. And, horrors! They even cease to rely on government to "realize their wants." To some of us, this state of affairs might seem rather promising; certainly, it is scarcely an evil so obviously monstrous as to require that we all bend our total energies to stop it from arriving on the scene. The authors' only defense for holding loss of political authority to be the ultimate evil is a few vague references to student riots, kidnappings in Italy, and civil war in Northern Ireland. These are cheap shots, and if one wanted to argue on that level, then those of us who are more eager to see the evaporation than the restoration of political authority, could easily counter with far worse evils attributable to the state in full command of that much-touted authority: the Gulag, Auschwitz, Dresden, Hiroshima, Vietnam, to name a few.

WE MIGHT ASK SOME further embarrassing questions of Rose and Peters and of neoconservatives generally. Who are those "meant to govern"? "Meant" by whom and by what right? Such fundamental political questions are, of course, not so much as intimated here, much less discussed at length.

No, not for Rose and Peters are the hard moral or philosophic questions about politics. To them it is all very simple: the political scientist is simply a social physician, advising his client. "Just as a doctor may advise an overweight patient to count calories to lessen the risk of a heart attack, so a social scientist may note that if politicians do not count the cost of public policy, then political bankruptcy can result." So there it is; Rose and Peters, and other social scientists with a similar mission, are not being any more controversial or value-laden than your friendly family physician, advising you for your own good how to run your life more effectively.

But the crucial problem, of course, is the leap in faith from the individual and his scientific adviser, to the government and *its* counsellors. For the individual advancing his own health does not have deleterious consequences for the rest of us; we can all applaud his concern and his doctor's sage advice. Not so patently evident, however, is it that advancing the health of the state is good for the rest of us. Indeed, this conclusion rests on several whopping assumptions: that the state's interest coincides with the interest of every one of its subjects, that there is harmony between state and society, and that there is no ruling class dominating and exploiting the rest of us.

Would anyone really say that it is self-evidently good and "value-free," for example, for social scientists to advise a government on how most efficiently to set up concentration camps, or how best to reduce opposition to such camps on the part of the public? Is our highest objective *really* to see to it that those who are "meant to govern" keep the allegiance of the bulk of their subjects under any and all circumstances? If not, and if Rose and Peters would draw the line at the most outrageously despotic of states, then what principles would they set forth to guide them? In short, when, if ever, does the *exercise* of political authority become for them a worse evil than its enfeeblement? No book on political authority that does not even address such questions is worthy of serious attention. The major interest of this book, in the last analysis, is in its revelation of the parlous state of the profession of political science. ❏

PRODIGAL FATHER: The Life of John Butler Yeats (1839–1922), by William M. Murphy. Cornell University Press, 680 pp., $27.50.

Sweet talker

GUY DAVENPORT

OF TIME, THE TYRANT AND obsession of the rest of the world, the Irish know nothing and care less. Dublin, a Catholic city for fifteen hundred years, has never gotten around to building a cathedral. They intend to, of course. From its inception, the Republic of Eire (or the Irish Free State, or Ireland, or Poblacht na h-Éireann, or whatever name they decide on, in time) has issued postage stamps depicting a map of the country that jauntily includes a largish portion of the United Kingdom. Never mind; the day will come when it will be Ireland's again. The clock in the Joyce household, we remember, disagreed by hours with Dublin's other clocks.

John Butler Yeats, one of the most gifted portraitists in the history of art, the father of Jack Yeats, Ireland's greatest painter, and of William Butler Yeats, Ireland's greatest poet, spent

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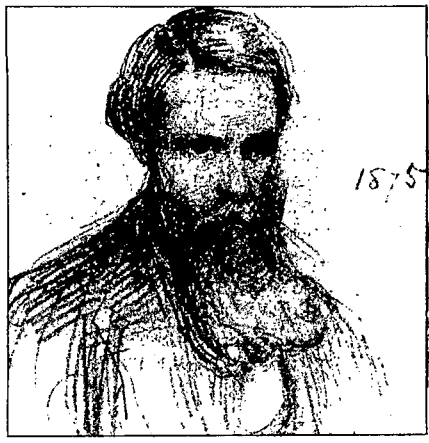
his 83 years as if time did not exist. When the rebellion began with an orgy of dynamite in 1916, one of the casualties was a studio full of his unfinished oil portraits. And he, always the level philosopher, would have been the first to admit that he probably wouldn't have finished them anyhow. At his death in 1922 there was a self-portrait on his easel that had been commissioned for the incomparable collection of John Quinn. It had been on the easel for 15 years. A generation of American painters watched him work on it. He would charge his palette with colors, take up a brush, fiddle with an effect, and begin to talk.

His skill as a raconteur, as a conversationalist, as a speaker at dinners or on any occasion, was magnificent, Irish, and inexhaustible. G.K. Chesterton remembered an offhand example of his mastery of the sentence: "Mr. Joseph Chamberlain has the character, as he has the face, of a shrewish woman who ruins her husband by her extravagance; and Lord Salisbury has the character, as he has the face, of the man who is so ruined."

Such balance of phrase, melody of words, and pungent imagery were accomplishments as admired as they were expected in J.B. Yeats's world. He talked with William Morris and Sam Butler, Father G.M. Hopkins and Edward Dowden, with Lady Gregory and John Quinn, with Edwin John Ellis the editor of Blake and with John O'Leary. He spoke briefly on the street one day with James Joyce. It tells us much of J.B. Yeats's ambience that he remarked to Quinn in later years that he was aware the people Joyce wrote about in *Dubliners* and *Ulysses* existed, but of course one had not met them.

The Yeatses were Anglo-Irish with eighteenth-century manners. They abided the Catholics but drew the line at Scots-Irish Protestants, who were apt to be ill-bred, bigoted, and enthusiastic. The young John Butler went off to a proper private school and Trinity College, and was setting out to be a barrister when he married Susan Pollexfen of Sligo, the sister of a schoolmate. Her family were merchants; in W.B. Yeats poetry we hear much of them, their stalwart character, their virtue.

A great measure of Pollexfen endurance was indeed necessary to be the wife of John Butler Yeats, who in the first 10 years of his marriage earned exactly 10 pounds, and that was a college prize for eloquence. Susan Pollexfen Yeats bore him two sons and three daughters. To them we are indebted for many fine poems, paintings, and books (the daughters founded the Cuala Press and collaborated with Lady Gregory in a little renaissance of Irish folk crafts). But Susan remains a shadowy figure in all of this, a patient woman with a brilliant, unpredictable husband and talented children. Caught between the practicality of her own family and the irresponsibility of



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the Yeatses, she went quietly, pitifully mad.

J.B. Yeats spent his entire career as a Dublin barrister drawing caricatures of the court. In the only deliberate decision of his life he moved to London to study art, but when he arrived there he became the universal model of dilatoriness. Everyone liked him, he had a preternatural gift for catching a likeness, but he fitted into no editor's or sitter's schedule. Robert Browning called, possibly wanting his portrait painted; we shall never know, as J.B. Yeats never got around to arranging an appointment. Nor were Dante Gabriel Rossetti's overtures followed up.

Not until he was 61 did he have an exhibit, at which time Dublin learned all at once, in the space of a week, that three Yeatses—old Jack, young Jack, who also had an exhibit, and Willie, who had a play on the stage—were all geniuses. One suspects that the news was equally astounding to old Jack, for whom this week of exhibits and plays was merely an interval in his life of impassioned talk. If, as he heard, he was a portraitist of the first rank, he had better set about founding a studio and taking commissions.

Such was his intention (when he allowed himself an intention), but another matter intervened. A lawyer from New York with a taste for art and things Irish, had begun coming to Dublin to spray dollars in all directions. He bought Yeats drawings, he bought Willie's manuscripts, he bought books from the Cuala Press. It was of no interest that this John Quinn also bought Brancusis, Picassos, Wyndham Lewises, Rousseaus, Augustus Johns, and Matisses, or that he owned all of Conrad's manuscripts and a manuscript of Eliot's that would surface years later, the first draft of a very different *Waste Land* from the one we know as transformed by Ezra Pound's editorial pencil.

When Quinn arranged for a show of Irish folk craft in New York, to be exhibited by Lillie Yeats, old Jack thought it would be a fine idea if he tagged along with his daughter to see the sights in America. Quinn thought this an awful idea, for what was he to do with an old man who could talk all day and most of the night? What he did was introduce him around (people loved him), commission a self-portrait for his collection of modern Irish art, and abide Yeats's leisurely ways until it was time for his departure back to Dublin.

QUINN WAS ONE OF THE busiest men in the world. he was a corporation lawyer whose client was apt to be Standard Oil of New Jersey and his adversary in court The United States of America. He was involved with the struggles of the avant-garde (sending almost daily checks and advice to Pound, Joyce, Eliot, W.B. Yeats); he was the most astute and sensitive collector of modern art in the United States, making even Gertrude Stein seem an amateur.

And here was old Jack Yeats come to visit. Quinn got him a room in a bohemian and wonderfully comfortable boarding house run by three French sisters. Here Old Jack became the mentor of young painters and poets. He was a success as an after dinner speaker. Willie looked in while he was in the States on his reading tours, letters floated back and forth to Dublin and London (letters so interesting that two selections of them, one by Pound, one by Joseph Hone, made old Jack famous), and the drawing of portraits in pencil went on, as often given away as for a fee.

He never went home; he is buried in Chestertown, New York, in a cemetery plot donated by his friend Jeanne Foster, Quinn's last mistress. He never finished the self-portrait. If he never finished anything properly, neither did

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he use anything up. Life remained a wonderful round of talk, of drawing, of eating, of drinking, of reading, of speculation. He was always on the defense against every enticement to run smoothly in a groove. He wished Willie would give up his silly mysticism and John Sloan his silly politics. He lectured Quinn; he threw things at trained nurses who came to look after him in his bouts with the flu. His legacy is thousands of discerning, hastily rendered pencil portraits, some masterful oils, and his life.

It is William Murphy's surest understanding in this long and meticulously documented biography that Jack Yeats's life, his daily round multiplying into a prodigy of years, is what we want to know about. A separate study (one is needed) of his art would have been quite a different book. A knowledge of his sitters would constitute a history of a large part of the intellectual life of Dublin, London, and New York for over half a century. To write biographies of the people around him one must helplessly make a generous space on the stage for old Jack Yeats. B.L. Reid found that this was so when he wrote his fine life of John Quinn, *The Man from New York* (1968). In books about W.B. and young Jack Yeats, in books about the Irish renaissance, about realist painting in New York at the turn of the century, there he is, a firm old man talking and talking.

In Murphy's biography he is frequently offstage while necessary details are imparted—facts about Synge, the Armory Show, Lady Gregory pacing to and fro, Maude Gonne, Roger Casement—but he is always present in his absence. He was, as Murphy discovered, a spindle around which an incredible richness of strands was wound. He was strangely unaware of his prominence. He was one of the last people in Dublin to realize that Willie was an established poet. It is questionable if he knew who his friend and patron Quinn really was.

Jeanne Foster, whose beauty inspired his finest drawings toward the end of his days and whose friendship he enjoyed, remembered a characteristic tale of old Jack's tenacious placidity. Quinn, busy with a case at law, was going mad with old Jack underfoot, imperturbable and leisurely, good grammar and poised phrases leaping from him as thick as Dublin fleas. He secretly phoned Miss Foster, asked her to pretend she was going shopping, and to beg the company of a gentleman.

"To be sure," agreed old Jack, always ready for a new turn to things. Quinn's Rolls came around, old Jack was tucked into it with a hot water bottle and a lap rug. He was also, at his request, provided with a hot toddy to sip, for his health. As the great car, the chauffeur, the beautiful woman, and the 80-year-old Irishman moved into the January slush of Fifth Avenue, old Jack turned to Jeanne Foster with a happy sigh. "One thing you've got to admit about Mr. Quinn," he said. "He knows how to live." ❏

WHERE THE RIVERS FLOW NORTH, by Howard Frank Mosher. Viking, 188 pp., $8.95.

The myth of the land

NOEL PERRIN

EXACTLY A CENTURY AGO, Henry James made a list of the handicaps under which the American novelist operates—or used to, anyway. There was, James said, nothing for him to write about. For example: "No sovereign, no court, no personal loyalty, no aristocracy, no church, no clergy, no army, no diplomatic service, no country gentlemen, no palaces, no castles"—and the list goes on for half a page. It finally ends, "no literature, no museums, no pictures, no political society, no sporting class."

James went on to discuss the mystery of how, with all these lacks, Americans could write fiction at all. He concluded that the American novelist wiggles out of his dilemma by the use of humor. He has his joke, as James says.

Henry James had hold, I think, of half a truth. It's a half that's valid even now that we have such a large army, so many diplomats, such endless ranks of pictures and museums. We do indeed have our joke. A good part of our literature, from Mark Twain to Pynchon, is jokes.

But the American novelist has serious moods as well as comic ones. Then, instead of telling tall tales, he writes myths. Or, rather, he writes his share of what has been our one great myth. This is, of course, the myth by which we attempt to possess the land—or, perhaps, more broadly, to come to terms with the wildness of the new world we conquered. Cooper, for all his pretentious writing and social absurdities, survives because of his early and brilliant formulation of that myth. Melville managed to make it seagoing. Faulkner put his impress on it so powerfully that for more than a generation now Americans have been seeing their land through his eyes. I think it can be argued that the most important change of the 1970s is the return-to-sacred of our landscape. (It was, once before, for the Indians.) It can be argued further that that phenomenon owes more to Faulkner stories like "The Bear" than it does to environmentalists like John Muir and Aldo Leopold. Perhaps even more than it does to the decline of Christianity.

Howard Mosher is almost outrageously mythic in *Where the Rivers Flow North.* The book consists of six short stories and the long novella that gives the book its title. All are set in the far north of Vermont, in what Mosher calls Kingdom County. There is a deliberate echo of the Northeast Kingdom (which is the name Senator George Aiken gave that wildest and poorest part of his state more than 40 years ago), but Kingdom County is more a mythic place than a real one, and its true affinity is with Yoknapatawpha County.

The stories have their moments —Mosher is a good writer—but no one of them is completely successful. Mosher tries to pack in too much significance, and he is too nearly under the spell of the sole proprietor of Yoknapatawpha. In fact, a Faulkner character actually invades one of the stories. Mosher calls her Alabama Jones, but she is really Lena Grove from *Light in August.* How does this southern girl get up to northern Vermont? In theory with a traveling girlie show (run by the same much older brother that Lena had in Faulkner), but I suspect she really walked. At any rate, when the reader meets her she is

NOEL PERRIN's latest book is First Person Rural: Essays of a Sometime Farmer. *He lives in Orange County, Vermont.*

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piking along the county road, and a man in a vehicle stops to give her a ride, just as one did in the opening pages of *Light in August.*

"Before I could even reach out and swing open that heavy door for her she was inside the cab, talking," the man says—and that "even" is practically Faulkner's trademark. And what does Alabama say as she climbs into the Vermont logging truck? "I don't believe it. Now that I am here I still don't believe it. It's like a color postcard, I reckon, like my brother used to send us." I reckon that's Lena-talk.

But at the end of the story something happens that is symbolic in more senses than one. The brother offers the young Vermont logger a job with the show. If he took it, he would go south, and the clear implication is that he would be Alabama's man. He declines, and stays in Kingdom County. This has significance in the story, and also significance outside the story. I think it signifies Mosher's struggle to pull free from the powerful influence of Faulkner.

In the novella, if not in the stories, that struggle is successful. "Where the Rivers Flow North" is a fine strong piece of work. In a way it oughtn't to be. It is so crammed with meaning that it ought to fall of its own weight. But it doesn't. It soars in a true mythic flight.

The characters are an old Vermont logger (6′ 4″, with a cant hook instead of one hand) named Noël Lord, an old Indian woman named Bangor, an old hound named Red, and an old logging horse named Farting General. These four live together on the upper reaches of a wild river about to be dammed by a power company. They are surrounded by roughly nine-tenths of all the symbols ever accumulated by the American wilderness myth. On Noël's own land is the last stand of virgin pine in the state of Vermont. (Near the end of the story he cuts it, though his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather had all protected it.) Hovering just north is the last panther in Kingdom County. (There is an epic panther hunt, and two epic human fights for good measure.) There is even a great boulder, known to Noël and Bangor for reasons the book makes valid, as "Jesus Saves."

All of this ought to be too much. It isn't. Partly because Bangor is an original and marvelously realized character all of the time, and Noël is most of the time. But mostly because when Mosher turns his back on Faulkner and gives himself space enough, he is a very effective myth-maker.

Going to the novella from the stories, I had my lip already curled, ready to be patronizing. I stayed to read it in one enthralled swoop. ❑

HIDDEN TERRORS, by A. J. Langguth. Pantheon, 352 pp., $10.00.

Our boy in Brazil

ROSE STYRON

"*THE RIGHT PAIN IN THE* right place at the right time." This was the motto of Dan Mitrione, whose kidnap-assassination by Tupamaros in Montevideo brought him instant fame in 1970 and caused him to be the subject of two important documentaries of our time: Costa-Gavras's film, *State of Siege,* and A.J. Langguth's new book, *Hidden Terrors.*

The pain was direct and lasting—Torture with a capital T. Mitrione, as head of USAID's public safety program in Brazil and then in Uruguay, was responsible through the 1960s for instructing a network of Southern Cone security police in the most effective techniques of crowd control and prisoner interrogation. Applied to political detainees (primarily young leftists) manually or through the use of chemicals, sophisticated psychology, or U.S.–manufactured instruments, the interrogation techniques were designed specifically to humiliate and dehumanize, to create despair, above all to act as a warning (a hidden terror) for any citizen conceivably sympathetic to the victim.

They were also, of course, designed to elicit information. A Connecticut-educated Cuban double agent named Manuel Hevia told the *New York Times* (Aug. 4, 1978) he had watched Mitrione torture four beggars to death with electric shock as part of a demonstration. Mitrione cautioned his pupils to take care, however: brief intense pain was the best kind; premature death would mean the technique had failed, since dead prisoners cannot inform. Is this tale true? According to a Uruguayan officer trained under him, Mitrione would leave the room before torture commenced. Other testimony, in the form of stories traded by surviving prisoners, placed him as a witness or participant during the ordeals. Neither Costa-Gavras, who cast slim continental Yves Montand as his protagonist, nor Langguth, who described Mitrione as a corpulent, cigar-puffing midwesterner, included any scene that tied Mitrione directly to murder. This is merely a technicality, but the detective in us remains unsatisfied.

The seasoned journalist whose book we are grateful to consider here could not have chosen his protagonist because of any striking personality or individual achievement, or even notoriety. Dan Mitrione was a faceless patriot working for money. He apparently never suffered the moral or intellectual conflicts of company man Philip Agee, a minor character in the book.

Mitrione's attraction for artist and reader is rather as a symbol of America during two decades of its government's muddled war on Communism, a war that encouraged right-wing authoritarianism and contributed to the undermining of democracy and human rights in one nation after another to the south. Langguth compares police advisers to foot soldiers in Latin America; the CIA were the officer corps, the ambassadors and station chiefs the field commanders carrying out policy from Washington. Mitrione, we conclude, was a smarter, subtler, *political* William Calley.

Hidden Terrors is in some ways a historical novel. Its characters are many and vividly drawn, its narrative full of suspense. The detailed revelations of international complicity are gripping, depressing. The first chapter (disjointed and a bit tedious) opens in Dan Mitrione's home town of Richmond, Indiana, with his body lying in state in a closed coffin surmounted by a huge wreath of red, white, and blue flowers sent by President and Mrs. Nixon. It backtracks to the first news of the kidnapping. Tupamaros had seized Mitrione and the Brazilian vice-consul on their way to work in Montevideo. It was announced that their release was

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contingent on the release by the Uruguayan government of 150 political prisoners. The family waits to see if President Pacheco will bargain (he states he will never negotiate with criminals) or if President Nixon will apply pressure.

Meanwhile, Langguth sketches Mitrione's youth for us: Italian immigrant parents, Catholic elementary school, public high school (his yearbook label: "Our tall, dark and handsome football hero"), a job with International Harvester, the navy, marriage, years as a local cop and ambitious police chief and family man (nine children), FBI school, and then a quietly placed application for the new foreign aid program.

Radio reports filter in of Dan's being shot, but with no damage to vital organs—and of a new negotiation deadline. The newspapers publish a letter from Mitrione to his wife, asking her to ask the American ambassador to please liberate him. But the deadline passes, and on August 10 a phone call to Richmond confirms that Dan's body has been found. Later in the book, Langguth states that Dan Mitrione was "the first sacrifice" to the show of strength of the President whose patriotic wreath Dan's coffin bore.

WITH CHAPTER TWO the drama gains focus. Langguth interweaves Mitrione's movements with events in early Alliance for Progress days and with the actions of its prime movers. Mitrione had left Richmond in 1960 for training in Eisenhower's Washington and assignment in Brazil, where Quadros was vying with Goulart for U.S. approval. Latin America, beyond Cuba, still did not engage the interest of our public or press or top political scientists. Kissinger downgraded it. Harvard Professor McGeorge Bundy was heard to remark, "Second-rate subjects attract second-rate minds." Six months later Bundy was JFK's foreign policy adviser. Fear of Castro's influence spread through the new administration.

Byron Engle, a decade after his World War II service and a stint with the CIA, had been asked to use his experience in organizing Japanese and Turkish police to put together a task force for training police in Asia, Africa, and particularly Latin America. Now he was busy managing clandestine schools for subversion and survival, featuring "anti-interrogation" courses that in reality prepared the students to interrogate. Its students were foreign military and police officers—some Vietnamese, many Brazilians, Chileans, and others. Its soil was American. The International Police Academy in Washington, D.C. was its home base, but the army, navy, and special forces—the Green Berets—helped out in Texas, Maine, California, Kansas, and the Panama Canal Zone. Fort Bragg, for example, taught propaganda and psychological warfare. Ten or fifteen years later, natives and refugees and U.S. citizens trapped in the detention cells of Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, and Argentina listened to their savage captors boast that they had been trained in the United States.

In Brazil, the police officers that our "foot soldiers" had recruited and equipped acted with fresh confidence. They formed a death squad. They organized an intelligence network called OBAN. Massachusetts's Lincoln Gordon went to Rio as ambassador. He despised Goulart for his crudeness, labeled him erratic and too easily influenced by the left. The CIA spent $20 million in the elections of 1962. By 1964 a coup had toppled Goulart and certain people in Washington hastened to take credit. In the police state that ensued, the first notorious torturers emerged. Langguth gives us a "human" glimpse of three or four—the widely feared Sergio Fleury, for example, sometimes cried at movies. Another, Alfredo Poech, trained at Fort Bragg, claimed that 85 percent of the guerrillas were psychotics, most of them the children of separated parents.

By Chapter Five, the prime movers and pain-inflicters are being upstaged by young articulate survivors of that pain—idealists, disillusioned students, philosophic rebels named Jean Marc, Fernando, Angela, Marcos, Flavio, Marlene. Jean Marc Von der Weid was a conservative, bookish student from a prominent family. He was radicalized when police clubbed him during a demonstration in which the slogans read "Americans Out of Vietnam" and "Dictatorship Out of the University." Next, a 17-year-old friend was shot to death at another demonstration, and Jean Marc kept public vigil. He became an activist in social causes; in time, with political crises, he was deemed a threat to the authorities, and suffered detention with severe bouts of unspeakable torture. At one point we see him "trussed like a chicken," blindfolded, hung upside-down, listening to English-speaking voices.

Geology student Marcos Arruda was picked up on a date with Marlene Soccas, who was falsely suspected of something or other. He was so physically devastated by torture that when he was brought to see Marlene in her cell, the guards jeeringly referred to him as "Frankenstein." Following an Amnesty International campaign on his behalf, Marcos was released to Switzerland and obtained a visa to the United States. Although he worked hard here, he was repeatedly threatened with deportation by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. *Ultima Hora* journalist Flavio Tavares was arrested by the death squad, given shock by a gray generator with the red-white-and-blue shield of USAID on it, and examined by an army doctor to determine how much more pain he could stand and still live. The doctor's appearance raised and then dashed his hopes irretrievably. Brave Angela Camargo Seixas, who opted for stoic silence, was given the worst treatment, including wires in her vagina to induce shock.

THAT WAS BRAZIL. Mitrione left it and returned to Washington as an instructor at the International Police Academy. In the late 1960s, he moved on to Uruguay, where he confronted another cast of characters, among them the up-and-coming young (CIA-payrolled) police commissioner, Alejandro Otero. In Montevideo Mitrione tightened the routine, increased shipments of U.S. equipment and instruments for crowd control, sought more recruits for training back home (including bomb-building at Los Fresnos), and helped the CIA put Brazil's death squad in touch with Argentine, Uruguayan, and Chilean police. He was very good at his job and aroused much hatred; in the end he was killed for his efficiency.

And pain was coming full circle. Otero's girlfriend, who may have been sympathetic to the Tupamaros, was picked up by the police and brutally tortured. Released, she told Otero that Mitrione had watched and assisted in her torture. But when Otero complained to Mitrione he was "put on ice," since Mitrione knew he himself had the full support of both governments. Otero told reporters, and a process of exposure began which, five years later, shut down the IPA. The

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training of foreign police officers—including those in Latin America—has continued, however, under the auspices of the Drug Enforcement Administration's International Narcotics Control program.

Thus, the damage goes on. Although military aid to some of the worst human rights defenders has stopped, it continues in many cases, and the cessation of aid to Argentina and Brazil—if indeed it has completely ceased—appears to be as much their doing as ours. Our Latin American agents and legatees are still active, and not only in Latin America. When Chilean ex-ambassador Orlando Letelier was blown up in his car in Washington, an American girl, Ronni Moffitt, died with him. A three-year investigation pursued jointly by Chilean and American friends, and at last, by the Department of Justice, has placed the blame on Cuban exiles living in Miami. Hired by the DINA, the Chilean secret police, to carry out its plans, these agents were trained long ago by a CIA hoping to destroy Castro.

Attention must be paid, then, even to the testimony of double agents such as Manuel Hevia. The echoes from Uruguay, Chile, and Brazil must still be listened for. The fresh cries of pain from Argentina, Nicaragua, and Paraguay must be heeded. And books such as *Hidden Terrors* must be read carefully and considered in the light of the American people's responsibility to humanity. ❏

ACTING OUT: Coping with Big City Schools, by Roland W. Betts. Little, Brown, 253 pp., $8.95.

Rotten kids

DIANE DIVOKY

A LOT OF BOOKS HAVE been written over the years about the New York City schools, ranging from the sensational and sentimental (*Blackboard Jungle, Up the Down Staircase*) to the political (*110 Livingston Street, Confrontation at Ocean Hill–Brownsville*). A number of them have a lasting place in the literature of education; *Our Children Are Dying, 36 Children,* and *Being with Children* come to mind. But given the number of writers who live cheek by jowl with the phenomenon that that school system is, the wonder is that there haven't been more.

The reason may have something to do with the subject's capacity to overwhelm those who would capture it in print—as it overwhelms those who would run it or change it. First of all, it is vast, with more than a million children and close to 100,000 adults housed in 1200 facilities. More important, all those people are members of a self-contained and bizarre society with its own arcane rites and cultural cues—one that, unlike other large school systems, as Roland Betts notes, "names its buildings after famous numbers."

Those who have been successful in the past in conveying some sense of this intractable world have focused on one or another microcosm to exemplify the whole: a particular classroom or school, a specific confrontation between school and community, or the top-level bureaucracy. In *Acting Out,* Betts tries a different technique—piling example on example, anecdote on anecdote—to explain the dynamics of the city schools. The catalogue is an old literary device, and it works nicely for him, providing a feel for the richness and absurdity of life in the schools while allowing the author to draw from his mass of material certain conclusions that follow organically.

For 10 years Betts worked in the schools about which he writes, as a teacher, a trainer of teachers, and an administrator. That's a very long time, particularly for someone with good antennae. One of two things usually happens early on to the aware or idealistic in that environment: they rapidly succumb to the system, becoming just like the callous, numb, or crazy veterans around them, or they get out. To stay in for any amount of time and to continue to see the children not as enemies but as persons, and the schools not as a chaotic battleground but as a potential context for learning—even to stay humane, neither crazy nor denatured—is a significant accomplishment. Betts seems to have managed it by becoming a scrupulous collector and cataloguer of people, events, and moments he knew in the schools. Out of these sketches and vignettes—recorded with wonder and good humor—he has created his book, a kind of informal and entertaining, superior textbook of the sociology of the New York City schools.

He knows his stuff. There's the heated fascination the youngsters feel for "No Drawers," the substitute without underpants; the rhythmic showiness of a word game of insults called the "dozens"; the arrogant "contract strut" of teachers who know they are beyond being called to account; the halls as stalking grounds and measured turf; the myriad of ways people learn to protect themselves from each other in that world, whether it's biting off one joint of an opponent's index finger, playing dumb (literally), or jumping from a second story window when cornered by an enraged teacher.

What is most troubling from Betts's account, however, is not the hostility that permeates the environment, always ready to erupt into raw violence, but the uses to which the energy and abilities of the students are turned by the system. Betts makes it clear that, contrary to achievement test scores and the complaints of the teachers union, the children of the city display enormous intelligence and vitality in their dealings with the schools. They perceive the system as so alien, so bankrupt, and so threatening that a good part of their smarts and psychic strength go into subverting it, making a mockery of it in ways that testify to human creativity. The tragedy of the New York public schools, Betts seems to say, is not that they dampen the talents of the young, but that they've forced them to such nihilistic ends.

THE SINGLE MOST powerful person in each building, "the lord of the manor," Betts knows, is not the principal, but the head custodian, who can bring mere administrators to their knees. The single most important piece of paper is not the diploma or the test scores but the UFT contract, the gift of Albert Shanker to his minions. The staff members with the authentic skills are not the school psychiatrists or top-level administrators but the school secretaries, who, as "public relations anti-agents," can work hold buttons on a telephone with amazing dexterity, revert to "selective deafness," feign perfect ignorance, and—when pressed to it—insult with a viciousness un-

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known outside of their circle.

The science fiction creatures of the school drama are the paraprofessionals, who, as mostly mothers of school children, "alone have right of access to the two hostile camps—school and community." And the most pathetic are substitute teachers who, when routinely "pushed to the point of cracking and breaking" by a class and pleading to the regular school personnel for help, get only a shrug of the shoulders. Teachers make up a good part of the book, teachers who leap on their desks and deliver near hysterical soliloquies, teachers who beat their students with yardsticks in the bathrooms, teachers who write lesson plans for their colleagues as a second income, teachers who get promoted by sleeping with their bosses, teachers who are "at home in front of the soap operas by three-fifteen."

Betts also lets us see lots of children. Stanley, a 13-year-old truant, comes to school once a month to collect his free transportation pass and spends the rest of his days riding the subways alone. Although he can't remember his last teacher's name, he is an authority on the New York City mass transit system. Strangers come to his apartment door for advice on the quickest route to St. John's Place in Brooklyn, Betts tells us, and Stanley is nostalgic about the disappearance of the corncob-seat cars on the FF trains. James Thompson is the rare student who managed to succeed in both the world of the streets and the world of school. He had two ambitions in life: "to go to Harvard Law School and to knock off Chicken Delight." Jeffrey Atherton, a sixth-grader much embarrassed that school had failed to teach him to read, went home and laboriously created a 651-page sports scrapbook that allowed him to teach himself. When he brought the scrapbook to school, a veteran teacher tore it up and threw it away. The profiles of children work because Betts doesn't stay with any one too long. He lets us feel their pain, anger, and pride, but doesn't use them to wring our hearts.

Finally Betts does make his statement: the New York City school system is an institution totally at odds with its "clients," whose tremendous energy and vitality consequently are turned to avoiding or sabotaging the system. Schools work only as long as there is some agreement between those who teach and those to be taught as to the rules of the game, what values are worth trying to achieve, and what success means. As Betts notes, "For the longest time . . . parents sent their children to school to learn the three Rs; children came to school to learn the three Rs; and teachers sought employment in school to teach the three Rs. The unanimity of purpose made the measurement of success or failure a relatively reliable matter."

But in New York, at least, and perhaps in other places that show us the future, that consensus has broken down. Success in school can now mean whatever anyone wants it to mean, coping in whatever terms are still psychologically or emotionally possible—whether it's turning a class into chaos, selling dope without getting caught, simply remembering your locker combination, getting your parents to bully your teachers into higher grades, or not going at all. "Learning the three Rs, scoring well on standardized reading tests, and bringing home excellent report cards continue to motivate some children and most teachers," Betts concedes. "But for far too many children these are no longer primary concerns: Not one of the Rs is mastered; the answer grids on the reading tests are filled in while the seal on the textual part of the exam remains unbroken; and report cards never make it all the way home. But this means not that many students are not 'doin' good,' but that in the eyes of the children the schools are measuring the wrong commodities. Success is a largely personal phenomenon, combining the concerns of id, ego, and superego in a delicate balance that the bigness and blindness of the public schools are unable to understand, incorporate, or amend. How long schools can continue to function at cross purposes with so many of their clients is open to speculation."

Back in the late sixties, around the time of the great strike against community control, some hopeful observers of the public schools felt that the system was close to self-destruction, and that out of the wreckage something more tolerable might arise. Now, after years of financial crisis, it's becoming clear how tenacious the system can be in continuing to run, long after it has ceased to serve any function that its clientele and staff could agree on as useful, or to offer any chance for change. Betts himself doesn't hold out any hope, but he does illuminate how silly and sad a system gone totally wrong can be.

RECREATING THE PAST: British History and the Victorian Painter, by Roy Strong. Thames and Hudson, 176 pp., $16.95.

WILLIAM MORRIS AND HIS WORLD, by Ian Bradley. Charles Scribner's, 127 pp., $10.95.

THE DOYLE DIARY: The Last Great Conan Doyle Mystery, with a Holmesian Investigation into the Strange and Curious Case of Charles Altamont Doyle, by Michael Baker. Paddington Press, 120 pp., $12.95.

THE FANTASTIC ART OF VIENNA, by Alessandra Comini. Alfred A. Knopf, 128 pp., 85 plates, 40 in color, $20.00.

The past in pictures

PETER STANSKY

IN HIS EARLIER BOOKS, ROY Strong has written on Elizabethan portraits and Jacobean masques. Now, with a catholicity of taste one would expect in the director of the Victoria & Albert Museum, he has turned his attention to those sometime figures of fun, the Victorian "history painters," and makes a strong claim for taking them seriously. He has come upon a sentence by the nineteenth-century historian, Henry Thomas Buckle, that is so useful to his purpose that he quotes it twice: "There must always be a connexion between the way in which men contemplate the past, and the way in which they contemplate the present; both views being in fact different forms of the same habits of thought, and therefore presenting in each age, a certain sympathy and correspondence with each other." To Strong, "This sentence provides the Ariadne's thread for anyone who wishes to unravel the

PETER STANSKY is writing a book on William Morris. His Mr. Gladstone: A Progress in Politics *will be published by Little, Brown in the spring.*

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inner meaning of any Victorian vision of the British past."

There is a nice and appropriate irony here. Buckle is generally taken to stand for the unreflective optimistic view of history held during the nineteenth century. The sentence suggests a greater degree of awareness than he is generally credited with, and it has a relevance to ourselves. We must not automatically assume that we are now completely cleareyed and are able to see the past without the blinders that confined our predecessors. Looking at the art and artifacts of the Victorian age, and using them to try to understand not only the art but the age itself, we also, as Buckle says, reveal our prior assumptions and preoccupations. Generation by generation we reinvent or reemphasize the history that we imagine to be the definitive version, and almost certainly much of the Victorian age that we have ignored or thought to be of little interest will be brought into high relief by the particular concerns of our successors.

The astringent, even mocking devaluations once so much in vogue have given way, in accordance with Buckle's law, to a respectable rehabilitation, and now to an adulation of things Victorian that borders on the merely chic. Certainly this is at its most conspicuous in the world of "art." Both Sotheby's and Christie's have established special auction galleries to handle the steadily rising sales and prices of Victorian objects. There is something a little forced about the enthusiasm. No matter how great a sense of cultural relativism one tries to preserve, it does seem that a good many of the Victorian efforts are, quite simply, irredeemably bad. The successful show of Great Victorian Pictures on display in various parts of England from January to September of this year revealed some works of superior quality, but also inferior paintings in such numbers as to remind us that between Great Victorian and great paintings there is a significant difference. That display emphasized the dominating note of popular Victorian paintings: the anecdotal, the story—frequently sentimental and sad—that the viewer was asked to participate in while looking at the picture.

Strong now wishes to draw attention to a major genre of Victorian painting that has not received quite so much attention: "history pictures," in which the artist takes as his subject (and all Victorian pictures of whatever genre had to have subjects) episodes from British history, most particularly the civil war in the seventeenth century, with its opportunities to depict scenes and legends in the lives of Oliver Cromwell and Charles I. He would seem to argue for the aesthetic merit of many of these paintings—alas, on this score he is not particularly convincing—and takes a dig at the Pre-Raphaelites as being too highly regarded at present. (Tastes change at a dizzy rate nowadays: only a short time ago they were as little thought of as Strong's history painters.) "We cultivate third-rate Pre-Raphaelite artists because we approve of their milieu—a world of images echoing the obsession of our own painters with private as against public mythologies—but we ignore the sheer quality and brilliance of E.W. Cope's or E.M. Ward's great historical set pieces in the Houses of Parliament."

Strong writes here with the enthusiasm of the proselytizer, and no doubt Cope and Ward are daily done an injustice, but one has only to mention the names of Veronese, Rubens, Rembrandt, and Géricault, all of whom painted history pictures, to restore a sense of proportion. He is on much firmer ground—and indeed has a valuable contribution to make—when he deals with his painters as historians and historicists, giving due weight to the age in which they painted and to the age they made their subject. From that point of view their paintings are fascinating, and it is totally legitimate to subject them to "analysis in depth." Strong is at his best in his short essays on particular paintings, ranging from Benjamin West's Edward III series of 1787–1789, to paintings of the 1870s. He emphasizes the painter's sense of security and self-possession in his own period, and his obsession with historical accuracy as he ventured out of it into the past. It is here, it seems to me, that the Victorian painters became caught in the bind of fact and fantasy. They were more concerned with getting the faces, costumes, furniture, and background right as they became more eager, presumably in most cases unconsciously, to draw lessons out of the past for the nineteenth century, to shape the past to conform to the present. Verisimilitude and perversion of the past marched hand in hand.

Beginning in the late eighteenth century, the English interest in the past intensified, and there was an escalating production of historical painting. The subjects needed to have a certain sentimental resonance; somewhat contradictory historical figures were used for similar purposes. Hence the Protestant Lady Jane Grey and the Catholic Mary Queen of Scots were both painted in such a way to convey to nineteenth-century viewers the proper role of women—as submissive Victorian heroines—even though such a role hardly accorded with the facts of their lives; the historical Mary would have been disqualified—as a Catholic, a political "activist," and an adulteress—from serving as a model for the "angel in the house" so beloved of Victorian husbands, fathers, and sons.

BOTH SIDES OF A PAST controversy might provide lessons. In the earlier part of the nineteenth century, more painters were sympathetic to the Cavaliers than to the Roundheads when they painted scenes from the civil war. But, heavily influenced by Thomas Carlyle's heroic portrayal of the Puritan leader, there was a shift in sympathy, and Oliver Cromwell became highly regarded later in the century, even though the question of raising a statue to him by Parliament could still stir up indignation.

Cromwell stood for a practical and religious member of the middle classes to which Britain belonged more and more as the nineteenth century progressed: hence his elevation to heroic stature. But however admirable in his personification of the bourgeois virtues, Cromwell failed to answer to the need for romance. For that, Cavalier history still had its figures to fill the bill, which accounts for the extraordinary popularity of William Frederick Yeames's "And When Did You Last See Your Father?" Painted in 1878, it depicts a handsome little boy in blue satin and lace, evidently the son of a Cavalier in hiding, who is being questioned by a group of Puritans in sensible, dun colored Puritan costume, and all one's sympathies, needless to say, are with the little boy. Will he or will he not tell? That is the question that has charmed and tantalised generations of young viewers.

I share with Strong a memory of contemplating the picture in childhood, in my case in a volume of the *Book of Knowledge*—presumably illustrating the history of England, but of that I am not sure. My interpretation then was that the child would of course have lied, and said that he knew noth-

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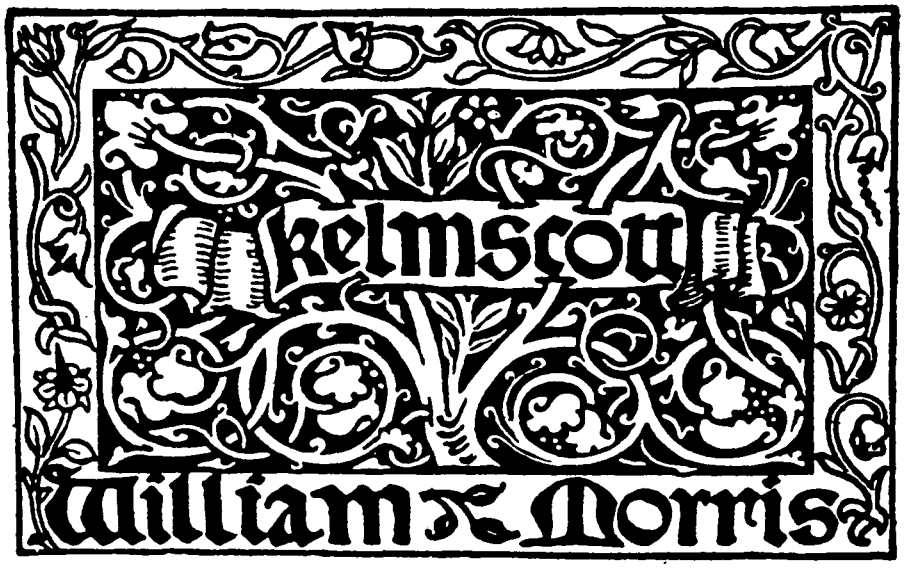
ing of his father's whereabouts. But the boy who inspired the artist appears to have been of too truthful a nature, and one fears the worst. "I had, at the time I painted the picture, living in my house a nephew of an innocent and truthful disposition, and it occurred to me to represent him in a situation where the child's outspokenness and unconsciousness would lead to disastrous consequences." Evidently the child was meant to be an ideal product of the English public school of the nineteenth century, addicted to the truth. But I continue to hope that, as in fact those public school boys were more cunning and less innocent than their idealized version, so too the child in the painting would deny knowing where his Cavalier father could be found.

The Victorian painters Strong discusses shaped a rather paradoxical combination of fact and fantasy in order to bolster the values of their country and their age. This was in marked contrast to William Morris, however much he might share some of their romantic notions of the past. For him, it was the medieval world as he understood it—free of the modern emphasis on individualism, with functioning guilds of workers, all taking a pleasure in work—that he found intensely attractive. No doubt there were elements of fantasy in that world; but unlike the painters, he made of it a standard of judgment to measure the inadequacies and inequities of his own time. He saw a sordid materialistic world in which most men and women were oppressed, deprived of opportunity to incorporate those virtues of masculine and feminine behavior illustrated by the popular painters of the time. Like the painters, he too invented other worlds, but his purpose in doing so was to criticize the present rather than to reinforce its values: the medieval world of *The Dream of John Ball;* the world of the future in *News from Nowhere.* In some of his writing he created a world that was acceptable to the nineteenth century, to a degree muffling his message. But in his designs there was no muffling, no gentling of mid-Victorian complacency. He was determined to simplify the environment of the England of his time, and to get rid of much of its suffocating clutter.

As with the painters, there was a certain amount of escapism: his vision was rural while England was becoming urban. Less content with the present than the painters, he had a more reverent attitude toward the past than they: it might be used as a contrast to the present, or a reproach to it, but never adapted in such a way as to reinforce it in its self-approval.



IAN BRADLEY, IN HIS FINE and copiously illustrated brief life of Morris, has captured the diversity of his achievement, and he states, but does not solve, the problem Morris faced: how to get past a clear recognition of the facts of modern life to a better society. Bradley quite rightly points out that much of the artistic production of Morris & Co. was available only to the affluent. Yet some of the objects his firm made, such as the simple Sussex rush chair, were quite inexpensive. Costly though his Kelmscott Press books might be in themselves, they have been an important influence on general book production and design down to the present. And as an ancestor of the modern movement, he made his influence felt upon the many, affecting the lives of us all far more than is generally understood.

Morris was more of a realist than he is usually assumed to be. He seemed singularly able to strike a balance between fact and fantasy, or to combine the two in a way that gave full play to the wide range of his diverse gifts. Reading Bradley, which has the virtue of making him wonderfully accessible, one cannot help wondering how much of Morris's achievement he owed to this rare equilibrium of mind and temperament. Certainly equilibrium is notably absent in the lives and art chronicled in *The Doyle Diary* and *The Fantastic Art of Vienna*: each in its own fashion presenting us with extreme solutions to the fact–fantasy conundrums of the nineteenth century.

The Doyle Diary is some 75 pages in a recently discovered journal of delightful fantastic drawings done in the late 1880s by Charles Altamont Doyle, the father of Arthur Conan Doyle, and brother of the very successful illustrator, Dicky Doyle. Sherlock Holmes's great accomplishment was to make facts that seemed fantastic make sense, but the world of fact appears to have been too much for Doyle père, who sought refuge in his drawings of birds and sprites—and ultimately for his son as well, who came to believe in fairies and spiritualism. Charles Doyle had a not particularly successful career in the Office of Works in Edinburgh, and escaped from it through alcoholism: he was to spend his later years in an asylum.

Playing on the continuing popularity of Sherlock Holmes, Michael Baker writes a slightly labored essay about his attempt to discover more about the father. As the Conan Doyle papers are presently unobtainable because of a legal dispute between his surviving daughter and the widows of two of his sons, the essay, though enjoyable, is necessarily incomplete. The drawings present at times a world of rather grim fantasy—as when Charles Doyle shakes hands with death or is "Being Taken Up" to heaven by a policeman with wings—but it is a much "lighter" and more "human" world than we meet in quite a few of the historical canvases discussed by Roy Strong.

Even Doyle's fantasies are mild compared to what happened in Vienna. Alessandra Comini, in two books on Egon Schiele and one on

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Gustav Klimt, has already demonstrated her high ability to discuss the artists of Vienna and their world. This brief study—fully illustrated—ranges from the end of the seventeenth century, the defeat of the Turks in their siege of Vienna and also the years of the Plague, marked by the fantastic plague monument in the center of Vienna, in the Graben—to the present and the exciting work of Hundertwasser. But her main emphasis is on the turn of the century, and the work of Klimt, Schiele, and their contemporaries. All of them were reacting against the fulsome and somewhat mad historicism of the fashionable history painter of the Austro-Hungarian empire, Hans Makart. Against the accepted art of Makartism and the empire was formed the Secession, that turn of the century movement that enlisted many of the best Austrian artists. The Secession was partially shaped by the Arts & Crafts movement inspired by Morris in Britain, but it is significant that it would be the more exotic work of the great Scottish architect, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, that had, perhaps, the greater influence in Vienna.

As befitting the home of Freud and other shapers of the the twentieth century—Mahler, Adolf Loos, Schoenberg, Ludwig Wittgenstein—questions of appearance and reality were faced in a more uncompromising way there than they were in England. Kokoschka's picture of himself with a life-sized doll in the likeness of Alma Mahler, Egon Schiele painting himself nude masturbating in front of a mirror—these are fantasies that correspond to the repressed realities of life, confrontations far more gently hinted at in the pictures of Charles Doyle and the writings and designs of William Morris. At the other end of Europe from England, fantasies were seized upon for their own sake, as a way of rejecting the hypocrisies of "official" imperial reality.

Who among the artists of Vienna did not know—in fantasy at least—what the facts of an empire in feverish decline portended? The English "history painters," William Morris (regardless of his influence as a modern ancestor), poor, quite mad Charles Doyle—all belonged, one way or another, to the nineteenth century. The fantastic artists of Vienna, deracinated, brilliant, shamelessly self-exposing, could belong to no century but our own. ❏

BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD: Planning for Livable Cities, by Wolf von Eckardt. New Republic Books, 211 pp., $10.00.

The end of abstract architecture

ALAN GOWANS

ABSTRACT ARCHITECTURE is dead. It died at Pruitt-Igoe. Wherefore, back to the drawing board. That is the core message of Wolf von Eckardt's newest book. And it's becoming a typical message of the late 1970s.

Von Eckardt is far from the first person to talk along these lines. For 30 years now, isolated voices have been querying our dominant architectural direction, complaining that "modern" architecture (i.e., the 1920 to 1950 International Style of Gropius, Mies, and Corbusier, which von Eckardt very appositely labels "abstract architecture") is insensitive to human needs, and its major exponents and local disciples everywhere arbitrary, dictatorial, and pedantic. *Back to the Drawing Board* repeats their arguments, but in fluent journalistic style—what oft was thought but ne'er so well express't, etc. Its author is as much reporter as scholar, as witness his writings in the *Washington Post* and the *New Republic,* and his 1972 award from the American Institute of Architects for "both a high level of architectural expertise and an acute sensitivity for the social needs that our environment must satisfy." Which means, in short, that the point of view expressed in *Back to the Drawing Board* is close to becoming common currency in informed architectural circles.

The change has come suddenly. As late as 1963, von Eckardt notes, praises and prizes were still being heaped on books like Christopher Tunnard's *Chaos or Control,* which echo-chambered the International Style's central party line: we are faced with an urgent choice between control—that is, control by urban planners inspired by great Formgivers—and chaos, that is, capitalist individualism based upon pandering to the needs and demands of backward, unenlightened, ordinary citizens; between tidy Corbusian Radiant City skylines, with their neat succession of highrises, overpasses, and standardized park benches, and the real skyline of American cities—a messy mixture of varying kinds of buildings put up to meet varying individuals' uncoordinated tastes and fancies.

All that, says von Eckardt, was before Pruitt-Igoe. Pruitt-Igoe was St. Louis's grandiose housing project financed by the federal government and designed by Minoru Yamasaki in the 1950s (the same man who later designed Manhattan's grandiose World Trade Center, thus revenging, perhaps, Hiroshima and Nagasaki). For von Eckardt it is the classic demonstration of how dangerously futile have been some of the major doctrines promoted by the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne, and specifically "CIAM's idea of the 'renovation' of cities, or urban renewal," formulated in the La Sarraz declaration of 1928.

Urged by the *Athens Charter* (a CIAM publication by Le Corbusier), it has come to mean, in von Eckardt's words, replacing the lively, organic complexity of old neighborhoods with high-rise slab, open space, high-rise slab, open space, high-rise slab, open space . . . as far as the eye can see . . . There can be no question that architecture—the principles of the *Athens Charter*—were instrumental in causing the crime, the alienation, and bitterness that pervaded the [Pruitt-Igoe] project—stench in the skip-stop elevators and muggings in those galleries. Over the years Pruitt-Igoe became irredeemably unlivable. In the end there was nothing left for the authorities but to blow it up. The collapse—in a dynamite blast on April 21, 1972—of the first Pruitt-Igoe slab, seems to me to mark the beginning of the end of abstract architecture.

This is typical of von Eckardt's style throughout the book. His description of how the debacle came about is masterful, and should become a text to replace Siegfried Giedion's dogmatic *Space, Time, and Architecture* (and how we need one!).

Not quite so compelling are his suggestions as to what we should do about it.

Among ALAN GOWANS's books is Images of American Living: Four Centuries of Architecture and Furniture as Cultural Expression.

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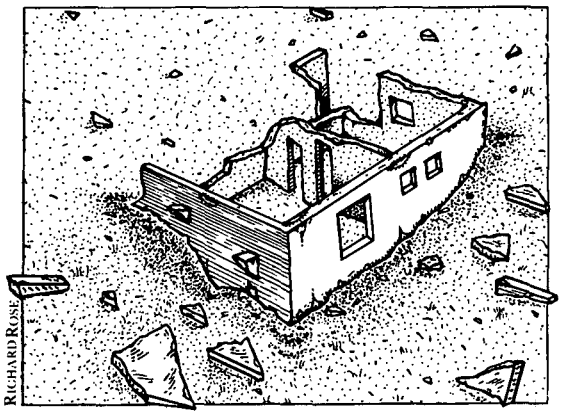
RICHARD ROSE

VON ECKARDT'S PRINCIPAL remedy for the problems caused by the ideology of the Radiant city seems to be large doses of Garden City doctrine: "... the ideas of Ebenezer Howard [who first published the Garden City concept in 1898] rather than those of Le Corbusier ... Howard is concerned with people and their relation to Nature. Corbusier is concerned with art and its relation to technology. The Garden Cities are a social, democratic concept. The Radiant City is an intellectual, elitist concept. And it is toward social, popular, democratic architectural and environmental design that we are heading."

Well and good. But it's not quite so simple as you might suppose from the concluding chapters of *Back to the Drawing Board.* Robert Fishman, in *Urban Utopias of the Twentieth Century* [*INQUIRY*, July 10, 1978], explains the difficulties very cogently. The Garden City's basic concepts may be sounder than Corbusier's high-rise-slab–open-space idea, but they are still designed to be imposed from above, by bureaucrats. They will suffer in execution accordingly. The fact is, Fishman demonstrates, that for every one house built in England in a Garden City project, a hundred were supplied by speculative builders to meet the needs of Britain's burgeoning urban population in the early twentieth century; without them, those millions would still be waiting in line and sleeping in tents, caught in the chronic and perennial housing shortage of all socialist countries. Why should it be different in the United States in the 1980s? Von Eckardt's confidence that an American government housing agency will succeed in providing Garden City housing in the quantity and quality desired, where all other governments have failed, seems to be rooted more in hope than experience.

Or more exactly—it's rooted in one of the several large patches of outmoded assumptions that conspicuously interrupt the smooth prose of von Eckardt's new views on architecture. After all, you can't rethink 30 years' convictions overnight—as von Eckardt, with admirable candor, freely acknowledges. One such patch is the stubborn faith of American intellectuals of the fifties and sixties in what could be called "socialism" in the sense of belief that the government is able to solve problems better than people can. Von Eckardt continues to nurse more than a little of the childlike faith that somehow, this time, government will succeed—instead of Radiant Cities, get the authorities to build Garden Cities, which anyway are much more in keeping with trendy environmentalism—and all will be well. Certainly private enterprise can't do it ... But why not? Only prejudice blinds American intellectuals to the truth that there are suburban developments all over the United States which, with their trees and winding roads and underground wires, *are* Garden Cities. They exist! Maybe not complete in every visionary detail, but at least they are *there.* People are living in them. Why would it be so foolish to look to private enterprise to include more Garden City details in such developments, instead of stubbornly going the route of some "Garden City Housing Agency" (GCHA—by 1984, 5000 employees and 500 houses ...)?

Another patch of outmoded thought that needs cleaning out is von Eckardt's assumption that artistic style doesn't matter, a view deriving from International Style dogma (it's *not* a style! it's not! it's not! it's just the normal, natural expression of structure and materials!). Eventually, von Eckardt will probably come to realize that what humanizes buildings and all other examples of public art, and effectively relates them to the past, is and can only be eclectic styles. Now he still has knee-jerk contempt for popular–commercial eclecticism. Like any good Corbusian he talks about "perfect little horrors: phony Colonial-Federal-Adams [sic] style with mullioned windows, dormers, keystones, and fanlights." He claims, rightly enough, that "pop is not popular"—i.e., that Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown's promotion of an academic pop architecture on the model of Las Vegas is not the answer. But what he hasn't yet come to see is that popular–commercial—"phony Colonial-Federal-Adams style" and the rest—is popular, to the tune of about 95 percent of all present-day construction (a fact he mentions in connection with mobile homes, without drawing appropriate conclusions from their invariably eclectic stylings). From which it follows that if you sincerely want a "social, democratic" architecture, this is a good place to start, and *not* by imposing Garden City instead of Radiant City styles. But given von Eckardt's current line of thought, he must in the end come to some such conclusion. The road has been trodden earlier. Göran Lindahl is now doing a massive study of the various wood-building traditions and styles in Scandinavia. Norris Smith has frankly called for a new intelligent eclecticism to humanize our cities. John Maass has emphasized how a creative eclecticism must be the vital result of current revivals of interest in the Beaux-Arts style; and so on. Unless he does an abrupt about-face, von Eckardt will soon be saying much the same—and, we may hope, saying it as forcefully as in *Back to the Drawing Board.*

CHOPIN, A BIOGRAPHY, by George Marek and Maria Gordon-Smith. Harper and Row, 289 pp., $12.95.

The great melodist

FRANK COOPER

AS HISTORY'S MOST popular composer for the piano, Frédéric Chopin has been the subject of about ten thousand books. This at any rate is the statistic that the Chopin Society in Warsaw issued in 1952, and it raises the question whether another treatment could possibly be needed. Ates Orga published his *Chopin: His Life and Times* as recently as 1976 (just two years after Gastone Belotti's massive three-

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volume *F. Chopin l'uomo* appeared in Italy and Bernard Gavoty's *Frédéric Chopin* in France, and one year after Wladyslaw Duleba's *Chopin* was published in Cracow). Yet George Marek would have us believe that at least there must be a market for a new treatment of Chopin's life in English.

Marek has previously authored biographies of, among others, Isabella d'Este, Giacomo Puccini, Richard Strauss, Felix Mendelssohn, Arturo Toscanini, and Ludwig van Beethoven. The last received praise for its scrupulous, level-headed replacement of legends with hard earned facts and sensible interpretations of them. Here, with the collaboration of Warsaw-born Maria Gordon-Smith (née Broniewska), Marek sets himself a similar task with regard to Chopin. But the going is rougher.

"What makes the biographical task especially difficult," Marek writes, "is the absence of some of his important correspondence. Letters are the bricks of a biography, but these bricks have been pulverized by a series of misfortunes." Insurrections and invasions in 1863, 1939, and 1944 destroyed an incredible amount of original Chopin material in Warsaw. Other losses of inestimable value occurred when George Sand burned her letters to him (returned to her, amazingly, by the well-meaning Alexandre Dumas *fils,* who chanced across them at an inn near the border of ethnic Poland), when an early biographer, Maurice Karasowski, lost many other letters, and again—about 1950 in New Orleans—when the great-granddaughter of Julian Fontana, Chopin's pupil and helper, cleaned out her attic and threw away a lot of "useless papers."

Thus, research into the tangle of legends surrounding the man Winthrop Sargeant calls "one of the greatest melodists music has ever known" continues to be fraught with frustration. Fresh material appears from time to time to shed a little light on a date, an address, another version of this or that waltz. To his credit, Marek has examined much of the recent Chopin bibliography, rethought many of the circumstances of his subject's life, and established a good, reliable historical setting against which to recount the remarkable saga of Chopin's career, his loves, his bouts with ill health.

The beguiling story follows the young Polish genius from the early years of his studies with the eccentric

Frédéric Chopin at the age of 39. This photo was taken in 1849, shortly before his death, by L.A. Bisson.

Albert Zywny and the cultivated, sympathetic Josef Elsner; through his early successes as a pianist (in concerti by Adalbert Gyrowetz and Ignaz Moscheles) and composer ("Hats off, gentlemen, a genius!" Robert Schumann declared about the 17-year-old Chopin's Opus 2, "Variations on Mozart's *Là ci darem la mano*"); his journeys to Berlin, Vienna, Prague, Munich, Paris (which became his home), London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Manchester; his fascinating associations with most of the great romantic figures of the day—musicians such as Friedrich Kalkbrenner, Franz Liszt, Hector Berlioz, Ferdinand Hiller, and Ignaz Moscheles, poets such as Heinrich Heine, Alfred de Musset, Alfred de Vigny, Adam Mickiewicz, and Gérard de Nerval, novelists such as Victor Hugo, Honoré de Balzac, Prosper Mérimée, and the painter Eugène Delacroix (named by the author as Chopin's *best* friend); his affairs with Constantia Gladkowska, Delfina Potocka, and the famous George Sand; his dedication as a teacher (about a hundred pupils during his short life); his productive years as a composer of unforgettably tuneful piano works; and his tearful, tragic death at the age of 39. It is a dramatic life to pass in view once again, one often marked by the contrasts of humor, high spirits, and adoration on the one hand, and, on the other, financial and emotional dissipation, recurring respiratory ailments, and the morbid specter of death. *Chopin, A Biography,* reads well, though certain aspects of interpretation, presentation, and factual content raise suspicions that Marek's scholarship has lacked that degree of uniform rigor that might have made this work more important.

Thoughts such as these, even in their contexts, seem less than cogent: "The reticence he showed in adult life may be traced to the political climate of his life. . . . Chopin's creative genius ripened rather slowly. . . . Chopin took sex seriously; he was as fastidious about it as he was about his gloves. . . . To believe that he whispered [at the keyboard] because of weakness is to ignore his range."

Numerous examples could be added to this list, as can errors of fact. Marek states that both Chopin's *Grand Fantasy on Polish Airs* and the *Krakoviak* are "now forgotten"—when five recordings of the first and four of the latter are available on domestic labels (and several others on foreign labels)! These works have been and are in the active repertoires of pianists such as Claudio Arrau, Garrick Ohlsson, Artur Rubinstein, Abbey Simon, and Alexis Weissenberg—not to mention countless advanced piano students. Also, after mentioning the two piano concerti, Marek declares that "in his later years" Chopin "never attempted another concerto." But Chopin certainly did. He brought it out in 1840 as the *Allegro de Concert,* Op. 46. It is the entire first movement of his never-completed third piano concerto. (Arrau recorded it some years ago on Angel 35413.) These, of course, may be but minor slips of the pen, or of the memory. Other matters weight more heavily upon the serious reader.

Why, for example, does Marek treat so cavalierly the vexing question of a possible homosexual relationship between Chopin and his friend Titus Woyciechowski? Since Chopin never addressed any other male with the intimately affectionate terms lavished upon his Titus, it is just not good scholarship to chalk the matter up to simply "the language of Romanticism," or to term it merely "a reaching for a kindred soul." Chopin's letters speak for themselves.

Why, too, does the author take pains to assert that "fresh evidence" tends "to change the conventional idea of the poor, frail, tubercular Chopin appearing like a wraith in the overheated salons of oversentimental countesses"—when he never presents this

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evidence? We are treated to at least 18 accounts of illness and page after page of salons, drawing rooms, and titled or wealthy ladies fawning over the little Pole. Time and time again we are reminded that Chopin was "pale," that he had "skin milk white," that he was the color of "parchment." And contemporary critics are cited carping about Chopin's "weak tone," his "slight sonority"; that he played "too quietly," "too delicately."

Marek omits any support for his offensive assertions that the lovely pianist Marie Pleyel "was a nymphomaniac," that Delfina Potocka's husband was "probably a sadist, possibly epileptic," or that it is "almost certainly untrue" that George Sand attempted to visit the dying Chopin and was turned away. Offering some evidence for such claims would have expanded the text only slightly while greatly contributing to the author's credibility.

Yet, such unsupported statements abound in this book. They lessen its impact considerably, even though it contains more than enough *adequate* treatments of relationships and events to keep it from being thought of as hack work. Particularly fine are the handling of Chopin's Warsaw years (his family, education, and early performances), of his intimacies and friendships with the women in his life, of his experiences as one of history's greatest pianists (almost a performance by performance account), of his last illness, and of the pitiful events involving his sister Louise that followed his magnificent funeral. These sections command our attention. They call on our sympathies and emotions. From time to time, they engage the mind, leading us to rethink Chopin's life in relation to his milieu and to his composition of melodically luxuriant, enduring works. To back up the text, eight pages of interesting and, at times, rare illustrations have been included. They serve to whet the appetite, not to satisfy it. Chopin cries out for pictorial documentation, so extraordinary were his four decades of existence.

Perhaps no one else, outside the pages of fiction, ever lived so romantic a life. To revisit it now, even through the somewhat flawed medium of this biography, is to know Chopin better. And that, in itself, is a step toward understanding the mysterious attraction that his music continues to exert upon uncountable listeners today.

F I L M

New York Film Festival II

STEPHEN HARVEY

IT WOULD BE NAIVE TO think that the habitués of the New York Film Festival flock like swallows each fall to Lincoln Center merely to see an assortment of *movies,* for heaven's sake. That would be like believing that all those Met subscribers come back week after week simply because they're languishing to see *Madama Butterfly* for the twenty-third time. After all, much of the festival lineup reaches the movie houses around town practically as soon as the final credits fade from the screen at Alice Tully Hall. So why bother to sign away two weeks of your life to ensure that your check gets to the box office before half of New York's 263,000 cinephiles get back from their summer sojourns in the Hamptons?

Actually, the festival is as much a state of mind as it is a sampling of 20-odd domestically untried movies. For many, it combines glamor (of the Isn't-that-Diane-Keaton-talking-to-Luis-Buñuel-over-by-the-water-fountain variety) with high seriousness of purpose. There's a certain cachet just in being one of the select two thousand who Saw It There First. As you read this, someone in Manhattan is doubtless still regaling a yawning someone else with that saga of how the electricity filled the air the night the festival premiered *Last Tango in Paris,* six years ago; by now, all those who claim to have been there could scarcely squeeze into Shea Stadium.

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Festival audiences exude a sense of their own prescience and discernment, quite unlike the cowed throngs at the first-run houses on the East Side. As the films unreel, the bored unashamedly walk out, and, at the end, competing choruses of hisses and bravos erupt as the hapless director takes a bow from the right-hand box.

This year's array, however, seemed hardly calculated to incite much passion on any side. Accordingly, those festival-goers in search of controversy pounced on a few items that, in other times, would have passed on with scarcely a murmur. One such was Bertrand Blier's newest, ***Get Out Your Handkerchiefs.*** Compared to his slapstick horror, *Going Places,* of a few years back, this is pretty mild stuff, but you would never have known it from the high-pitched reaction the movie provoked in New York a few weeks ago. Some extravagantly touted its alleged richness and audacity (viz., Pauline Kael in *The New Yorker*); others (mostly male, oddly enough) fulminated against its supposed misogynistic whimsy. I, however, can't fathom what all the shouting is about on either side of the barricades.

Blier's film is eccentric, to be sure, right from its addled opening scene. Seated in a Parisian restaurant, lunkheaded Raoul (Gerard Depardieu) has come to the end of his tether, trying without success to persuade his catatonic wife, Solange (Carole Laure), to eat, speak, smile, or show any signs of animation whatever—to the point that he randomly picks out of the lunchtime crowd a scraggly young aesthete (Patrick Dewaere) to bed Solange and rouse her emotions. From there, the movie proceeds along a gossamer strand of surreal logic; anyone within a kilometer's radius of this female immoveable object is sucked in as if by a vacuum. (This inelegant analogy is all too apt, as it happens. Blier's men are ruled by gonads and pride, claiming that Solange, to become truly content, needs only to be made pregnant. As it turns out they are absolutely right.) Bound in a cult of Solange-worship, the two men develop a deep bond of their own—a sexless one, at least on the surface of it.

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Thus distracted, they scarcely notice at first when Solange finds the companion of her woozy dreams in an eggheaded 13-year-old persecuted by his peers, and consummates the union quicker than you can say *Thé et Sympathie*.

The journey toward the wistfully wry denouement is engagingly offbeat; having tried out their tandem routines in *Going Places,* Dewaere and Depardieu play off each other with enormous éclat, ever mindful of the adage that first-rate farce must be played as if the business at hand were frightfully serious indeed. Blier has undeniable skill at capturing the absurd, persuasive detail, and he hones each individual episode (of which there are perhaps a score too many) with rare finesse and economy. It's all fun while it lasts, but in retrospect Blier's itinerary doesn't stand up to scrutiny. It seems to be leading to some grand cosmic theories on the true natures of men and women, but in the end Blier appears to be as nonplussed by the enigmatic creatures he's created as is the viewer. Are we to presume that women are really just bleak voids waiting to be filled, and men their interchangeable supplicants whose final reward is oblivion? As actors in an irrational world, they all seem pretty schematic to me. *Get Out Your Handkerchiefs* is provocatively fanciful, like one of Buñuel's lesser non sequiturs, but ultimately it's just about as vacant as Laure's brown bovine eyes.

ROBERT ALTMAN'S **A Wedding**, which opened the festival, likewise infuriated as many as it enchanted, but to me it proved only that even a director of real stature is capable of turning out something of supreme unimportance. After this, Altman might well consider retiring his decadent-community-as-American-microcosm bit once and for all, considering how threadbare the formula has become by now. Since *McCabe and Mrs. Miller* and *Nashville,* a dismaying thing seems to have happened to Altman—his satirical goals have shrunk while the size of his acting ensemble has expanded to the bursting point. In *Buffalo Bill and the Indians,* he was so intent on hammering home the hot news of our beastliness to the Indians that everyone onscreen was reduced to cigar-store totems and palefaced targets in a shooting gallery. In *A Wedding,* Altman's camera drifts for two hours past nearly fifty performers representing various subspecies of the Boobus Americanus, all for the purpose of proving what a ludicrous sham our native nuptial rituals are. Well, this is hardly going to come as a revelation to anyone who's attended such orgies of conspicuous consumption, or even just seen them lampooned in movies from *Father of the Bride* to *Goodbye, Columbus.*

All of which wouldn't matter much if Altman had derived anything fresh or penetrating from the subject, but it's merely the excuse for some easy snipes inspired more by variety sketch shtick than firsthand observation. Altman's contempt is so blatant that we're given no chance to make any judgments of our own—the viewer becomes an accomplice whether he wants to or not. Even had Altman wished it otherwise, there simply isn't time to give his huge cast of characters any human dimensions—as soon as one shows his venal colors, we're off to jeer at someone else. In *A Wedding* the groom's family are mostly patrician WASPS, and the bride's is a passel of redneck arrivistes, but whether Meissen or earthenware, they're all just clay pigeons.

Altman's images of a decadent America are now only a threadbare formula.

If a few are spared Altman's cheapest shots, the reasons seem to have more to do with exigencies of casting than anything else. The waning matriarch on the groom's side is viewed less witheringly than most, probably because she's played by that indefatigable legend, Lillian Gish—even Altman must pause at the thought of trying to make her look like a fool. Reputedly, Altman's actors are so loyal and adoring because he gives them so much liberty to improvise on their roles, but in fact his rigid typecasting undercuts all this alleged freedom. His performers may have been told to do what comes naturally; if so, they responded by trotting out what we've seen them do before in film after film, for Altman and others. Sister of the bride Mia Farrow serves up her wistful zombie routine, caterer Viveca Lindfors mutters and flutters, wedding coordinator Geraldine Chaplin is all fussy, unctuous inefficiency. Fortunately, the law of averages dictates that a few performers are bound to end up with less egg on their faces than others. Howard Duff does a pleasantly relaxed job as the bibulous family doctor, and Dina Merrill's blue-blooded steeliness is well utilized for the groom's take-charge aunt. Carol Burnett as the fatuous mother of the bride, in the throes of menopausal puppy love, is really a benign variation on the Eunice character from her TV show—contrast the part with the adulterous wife Lily Tomlin played in *Nashville* and you see what an easy mark she is for Altman's scorn. Yet Burnett's earthy intelligence reins in the caricature—as the one trained *farceuse* in the troupe, she knows when to keep her full artillery of tricks in check.

I suppose I wouldn't have minded Altman's facile snideness so much if *A Wedding* had at least been truly funny, but the movie is too diffuse and cluttered to bring the comedy off. Altman doesn't seem to know how to build to a gag—the actors' timing and the editing are always a bit lax, the camera always perversely finds just the angle that will blunt the effect of the joke at hand. Burnett, of course, could be a riot even in a Super-8 home movie, but her costars are left to flounder embarrassingly. Besides, Altman's notion of what's uproarious strikes me as more than a little peculiar. If the octogenarian senility of John Cromwell's officiating bishop doesn't grab you with mirth, there's always the nymphomania of Farrow's retarded teenager for a real belly laugh. The bleakest note of all is the calculated twinge of pathos Altman introduces at the end, when a car wreck polishes off a few of the nuptial merrymakers. After all, how can you kill off characters who never came to life in the first place?

Unlike *A Wedding,* **Newsfront** prompted no such storms of disagreement; the only possible reaction I could imagine to this genial Australian film is low-keyed pleasure. It tells of the heyday of the local newsreel industry from the end of the war through its TV-induced twilight a decade later, focusing on one dedicated cameraman doggedly recording fires, floods, and political upheavals Down Under. It's

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a fresh subject, particularly for those of us whose knowledge of Australia is restricted to a reading of *The Thorn Birds*, and it's handled with a sprightly intelligence. *Newsfront* exudes affection for the lost newsreel craft, reviewing a 10-year span of local history and the jingoistic, March of Time veil of platitudes in which the newsreels enveloped it, with the same caustically tinged air of nostalgia. Documentary footage and recreation of real events are seamlessly intermingled, while the milieu inhabited by the fictional characters is evoked with extraordinary care, attention, and humor. Although the energy of the first half eventually dribbles to a rather lackadaisical finale, *Newsfront* is a very distinctive job that promises much in store from its 28-year-old director, Philip Noyce.

FITTINGLY ENOUGH, closing night was reserved for a film that summed up the pervasive tone of this year's lineup. Craftsmanlike, thoughtful, and very cool to the touch, Chabrol's ***Violette Nozière*** discards the idiosyncratic passion that informed most of his earlier melodramas of homicide and misplaced lust. Based on events that mesmerized the French press and public during the early thirties, *Violette Nozière* is the portrait of a restless 18-year-old whose flair for role-playing reaches fatal proportions. Pasted to her mirror are photos of Lillian Gish, and Bette Davis in her platinum blonde phase, and the contrast of the two is entirely apropos. Surrounded by the frayed-doily decorum of her parents' home, she pretends to be the model of schoolgirl compliance; swathed in sleek black glad rags for her nightly excursions into the demimonde, Violette is a sultry cocotte with amoral delusions of glamor. Both part-time guises are fraudulent, but Violette is convinced that her future lies with her femme fatale self. She proceeds to grasp any means necessary to turn it into a full-time reality, filching money from her parents, deceiving and manipulating them to protect her cover. When their presence threatens the fulfillment of her dreams, she simply chooses to dispose of them.

According to contemporary accounts and Chabrol's film, Violette's case became a cause célèbre, the catalyst for a battle between the entrenched establishment, who deemed her a diabolical scourge of society, and the bohemian left, who exalted her into a crusader against bourgeois repression. With glacial irony, Chabrol shows us a girl who is neither monster nor martyr; having scarcely an ideological notion in her marcelled little head, she's an example of the banality of evil if there ever was one. In typical adolescent fashion, Violette views her parents alternately as tyrants and gullible fools, but what sets her apart is her unblushing single-mindedness in indulging her desires.

Throughout, the performances match Chabrol's usual high standards. Stéphane Audran and Jean Carmet are impeccable as the affectionate if obtuse parents, while in the title role, Isabelle Huppert is in every way as remarkable as she was in last year's *The Lacemaker*. On the surface the two roles are diametrically opposite, but she brings the same unerring spareness of technique to both. Beneath Violette's petulant pout, Huppert hints at a dense interior world beyond the ken of everyone around her, just as she did with the inhibited Pomme. Chabrol uses her elusive quality to forge a character that neither begs sympathy nor demands judgment; the self-centered myopia of Violette and everyone else concerned comes through with icy clarity. Chabrol doesn't make Altman's mistake of confusing emotional detachment with mere disdain; yet this film, like so many others in this year's festival, finally pays a price for the distance its director imposes between the audience and his material. The director's restraint and control become his own subject after a while, and an enervating one at that. There's a good deal to admire about a film such as *Violette Nozière*, but once ended it doesn't leave you with very much to hold onto either. ❑

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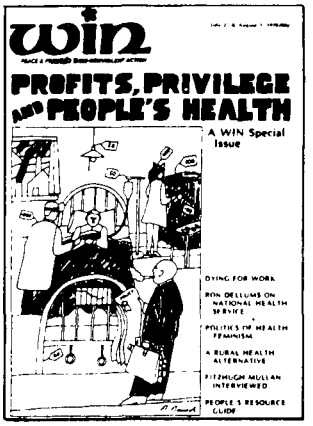

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